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# McBRIDE'S



MAGAZINE

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ROBERT M. McBRIDE & CO., INC., 31 East 17th Street, New York City  
Rolls House, Breams Building, London, E. C.

Robert M. McBride, President; Hampton Anderson, Treasurer; John T. Elsröad, Assistant Treasurer. Published monthly. 25 cents per copy; \$3.00 per year. For Foreign Postage, add \$1.00; Canadian, 50 cents. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at New York, under act of Mar. 3, 1879.

The Editor is always pleased to examine any material that may be submitted for publication, but he assumes no responsibility for it, either in transit or while in his possession although all reasonable care will be taken. Full postage should always be enclosed for the return of unavailable manuscripts.

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M<sup>C</sup>BRIDE'S  
MAGAZINE

APRIL, 1916



## IF THE SHOE FITS—

*A Novelette**By*

JACKSON GREGORY

THE man crouched lower still in the shadow of the box car. He was shivering, one would have said with a sudden chill. And yet it was an intensely warm night, not yet midnight, the middle of August. He wore a heavy overcoat, very long, touching the heels of his shoes, the collar drawn up about his throat. There was more darkness than light in the freight yards, and it seemed to his quivering nerves that everywhere about him the darkness was a thin, insufficient veil through which a million brilliant lights were flashing, seeking him out.

A slight noise, the sound of a man walking across the tracks, drove him deeper into the shadow until he had pressed his body between two cars. A brakeman with swinging lantern went across the yards, moving swiftly to supper and bed. The man between the cars eyed him suspiciously,

half expecting him to turn and come back. But the brakeman passed on, into the station-house and out of sight.

The man, who had stopped shivering a little, and who now was again shaking so that the heavy coupling chain against which he leaned clanked rustily, turned his eyes back to the way along which he had come. Yonder, like a sort of yellow, unnatural dawn against the horizon, he could see where the myriads of lights of New York turned upon him like evil, watchful eyes. He turned his back to them again, and again the softly jangling coupling chain startled him so that he moved swiftly as though about to run, and then dropped back, crouching, almost upon his knees.

Suddenly he grew very still, his whole body rigid, his nerves frozen with the greater, newer fear. Again

he had heard footsteps, again they were moving across the graveled yard. But this time they were slow, seeming to take on a vague, disquieting quality of stealthiness. And they were close to him. He turned his head a little. It seemed to his terror-sharpened senses that the noise his neck made against his stiff, starched collar must have cried out across the yards. For a moment the beating of his heart stifled him, the blood rushing into his ears shut out all other sounds. And then his leaping heart went suddenly still, and he grew weak and faint and sick.

Another man had swung down from one of the box cars, from the door upon the other side or from the rods underneath. He had crawled quietly beneath the car and now, a vague blur in the night, came forward. He had not seen the man in the long overcoat, did not see him until their bodies touched in the narrow space between the cars. Then he drew back with a little grunt, his head thrust forward, his fists lifted a little at his sides.

"Well?" he demanded when the two of them had stood silent for ten seconds. "What's the game?"

The man in the overcoat made no answer. He was moistening his lips, trying to drive back the tight, dry lump in his throat. And he still crouched in the thickest of the shadows, still shivered spasmodically. The other eyed him suspiciously.

"I asked what's the game?" he repeated presently. "Looking for somebody? You're a bull, I suppose?"

The man in the overcoat laughed nervously. And he had thought that he would never laugh again as long as life and memory were left to him. And then he broke off, shuddering again.

The other grunted again and put a hand in his pocket, not seeming to

note how the crouching man drew back distrustfully from him. The thing he had sought was a cigarette. With a careless movement he swept a match across his thigh, held it cupped in his hand and brought it close to his face.

As he stood the light from the big lamp across the yard, running under the car, found out his feet. They were the feet of a tramp, encased in ill-fitting shoes, much worn, laced with bits of string, the toe of his sock showing where the upper was breaking away from the thin sole. And now his hands, in the tiny light of his match, seemed not to belong to the same body as the feet. For, in spite of the grime upon them, they were white and the fingers were soft and slender and in all things the fingers of a gentleman unused to contact with the rough boards and rusty iron of freight cars. The clothes were old and tattered, the soft hat torn so that in places his dark hair showed. But again the face was the face of a man of intellect, of refinement even. As the light of the match flared across cheek and jaw and nose, as it showed the high forehead with the smudge of grease across it—

"My God!"

The cry, whipped from the lips of the man in the overcoat, was one of profound amazement. He stood suddenly upright, as suddenly as though he had been jerked upward by some force outside himself, greater than his own. And as he moved he drew his coat collar higher about his throat, pulled his hat brim lower over his face. The match flared a little in the gust of a draft drawn through the cars and went out. In the glow of the cigarette the face of the smoker was seen faintly and only fitfully.

"I—I am going crazy!" muttered the man in the overcoat. He covered



his eyes with his hand, his left hand, and stood still for a little, now and then moaning like a man in physical pain. And then suddenly, with a new something of command in his voice: "Let me see your face again! Light another match."

The newcomer eyed him strangely, drawing back a step or so.

"If you are not crazy," he said bluntly, "you're giving an excellent imitation."

"Here!" The left hand had dropped from his eyes and was now thrust out eagerly, something in the fingers rustling crisply. "There's ten dollars. Let me see your face, and you can have it. Quick!"

"No one ever told me that my face was my fortune!" The slender white fingers tapping the cigarette made no move towards the crinkling bill. "If I had gotten a place in a side show—"

"I'll give you ten, twenty dollars, a hundred dollars!" He was fumbling again in his pocket before he had said the last word. There was no doubting his genuine excitement, his nervous eagerness.

"Why?" The question, snapped out, was half anger, half curiosity. "Why do you want to see my face? I haven't seen yours yet."

"I'm paying for it, am I not?" The left hand, holding the banknotes, went upward swiftly to the hat brim, drawing it still lower down over the features already hidden. "Say I'm mad if you like. Here's the money. Do you want it?"

There was just a little hesitation, and that died quickly under a little, amused laugh. The fine, slender hand reached out for the bills.

"I happen to need just a bit of change," with a chuckle. "You wouldn't guess it from the style in which I travel, would you? And I need a new pair of shoes, as you may have noticed. I'll trust you, friend,

and won't count the money. Now," as another match scratched across his thigh, "I earn my money. Drink your fill of my manly beauty!"

Again the clean-shaven jaw, the dark line of the brows, the good-humored, frank eyes stood out in relief in the faint light. The man in the overcoat drew nearer, peering close into the face which he had paid a hundred dollars to see. And as the match burned down and went out he fell back, muttering to himself:

"It's impossible, impossible!— Things like this don't happen, they *can't* happen!— God! There's a chance!"

"And now—you don't want to spend another hundred dollars, do you?—I'll be going."

"Wait." A nervous hand, still the left hand, clutched him by the arm, dragging him back into the thick shadow. "I—I want you to do something for me. I," hesitatingly, "I wanted to see if—if you were honest. Will you go to the police station, quick? Tell them that Mr. Ruud, Jasper Ruud, is in the yards here and that he is hurt, badly hurt. I . . . I have been attacked by hold-up men . . . badly beaten. Tell them to rush here. Look!" For the first time he held up his right hand. There was a handkerchief about it and this was no longer white but drenched with blood. He drew the handkerchief away with a jerk, holding the hand out so that the lamp-light fell across it. Two of the fingers were crushed out of all semblance of shape. "You see? And I have a bruised side, and the side of my head— You will hurry? Here, wait. This," as his left hand went into his pocket and brought out a thick envelope. "Take this. You are to have a new pair of shoes!"

"I say." The other swung about



and came back. "If you are hurt

"Never mind. Do as I say. And run, man!"

The man in the overcoat watched anxiously as the other hesitated and then began to stride off across the yards. He continued to watch until the swiftly moving form stood clearly outlined in the street fifty yards away. And then he drew back between the box cars, slipped quickly under the coupling-chain, darted out upon the further side, and ran as a man runs for his life.

The man in the worn-out shoes and tattered clothing hurried down the quiet street, stopped once to ask a passer-by where the police station was, and hastened on again. He crossed the street, turned a corner, went down a short street, now running himself, swung about another corner and flung open the door of the station-house. A policeman in uniform was sitting at a little table, making his report. Two men in civilian dress were idling in the far end of the room, smoking and laughing. They all looked up as the newcomer came in, panting from his running. And as they saw him clearly the three of them stood up as one man and swung upon him with something in their air which did not escape him, which looked to him very much like excited surprise and threatening hostility.

"In the freight yards," he burst out, panting, his arm flung out, pointing. "A man named Jasper Ruud has been robbed and beaten. He wants you to come—"

The two men in plain clothes looked at each other, significantly, smiling a little. The policeman moved a couple of steps until he stood in the open doorway. His hand had dropped to the skirt of his coat. The two other men came forward slowly.

"Well?" demanded the man in rags, frowning. "What's the matter?"

"So Jasper Ruud is down in the freight yards, is he? And he has sent you for the police?"

"That's what I said!" And as he saw that they believed no word of what he was saying, "Just because I didn't stop to put on a dress suit you're not going to pay any attention to me, is that it?" He swung about towards the door. "I'm going to get a doctor. That man is badly hurt. And—will you let me by?"

The heavy hand of the big policeman was upon his shoulder, jerking him back. The two men in plain clothes had leaped forward, again as one man, when he had turned. They were experts at such things, and before he had guessed what was happening it had happened, and he was handcuffed and the things in his pockets were dumped on the table.

"What are you doing?" he stormed, shaking his double fists at them. "What do you think—"

The door at the far end of the room was flung open, and a heavy-set man in the uniform of a captain of police hurried into the room. He stopped suddenly, his mouth dropping open in his surprise.

"Jasper Ruud!" he gasped. "You got him!"

"I don't understand," muttered the stranger. "Jasper Ruud sent me. He is—"

The police captain laughed shortly. Then he stepped to the table upon which lay the articles which had been jerked from the struggling man's pockets, noting particularly the roll of bills and the envelope which the man in the overcoat had said was for a new pair of shoes. Here were more banknotes, a thousand dollars at the least, and a dozen or more checks.

"I am sorry, Mr. Ruud." The

captain's voice was meant to be sympathetic, but there was an undercurrent of great satisfaction in it which did not escape the prisoner's ears. "But it is our duty to arrest you!"

"But, I tell you, I am not Jasper Ruud! You are making a mistake."

"Maybe you can explain then, about these things?" He held up the sheaf of checks, held together by a rubber-band. "They are payable to Jasper Ruud!"

"He gave them to me."

The captain turned them over.

"They are not endorsed. Rather a strange sort of present, isn't it? And the banknotes?"

"He gave them to me, too. To bring word to you and—"

"And what?" quickly.

"To get me a new pair of shoes!"

The four men laughed loudly, as they no doubt thought they were supposed to do.

"It's a great dodge, Mr. Ruud. I don't know that I see just what you're figuring on. But I guess you know. And it's bold, by the Lord, it's bold and new! Going to make it a question for alienists when the thing comes to trial?"

"Trial? Do you mind telling me what you mean? What is this man Ruud accused of?"

"So you've forgotten?" The captain's eyes twinkled. "Well, you've the right to have us remind you. You are arrested for the murder of a man named Lon Kelton."

## II

THE papers were filled with it the next morning: An enterprising young reporter had gotten wind of it before the doors of the cell had clicked behind the man arrested as Jasper Ruud, and he had fought hard for an exclusive morning story, the biggest "scoop" of the season. But before he had pried out details

from between the stubborn jaws of the police captain half a dozen other servants of the great dailies had wired frantically to their various sheets to hold space for them. And when New York sat down to its breakfast it was with a damp paper spread out over bacon and eggs and coffee which were rapidly growing cold.

It was all there. Jasper Ruud, who had struck Lon Kelton, the gambler, with a billiard cue, crushing his skull and killing him almost instantly, had been arrested. His automobile, in which it was known that he had escaped from the city, had been found on the outskirts of Tarrytown, a useless thing with an exploded tire and a jammed axle. He, himself, seeing the impossibility of further attempt at escape, had dressed himself in old, tattered clothing, had smeared dirt and grime upon his face and hands, and had gone boldly to the police station, telling a story of Jasper Ruud beaten and robbed down in the freight yards. He had had upon him over a thousand dollars, and about another thousand in checks. He had claimed that his name was John Rand, and that Ruud had given him these things.

One paper, friendly to the great capitalist, was strong in its assertion that Jasper Ruud had lost his reason, that the thing which he had done before half a score of witnesses had driven him mad. All of the others saw in the whole thing but an extremely clever attempt of pretending to be insane, and contended that it was a thing to be looked for from the cleverest financier on the street. Naturally, no single paper, no single individual, for a moment placed the slightest credence in the statement which had been made to the police.

For when the real Jasper Ruud,

fleeing terror-stricken from justice and from the memory of the thing that he had done; had looked into the face of the man who had lighted a match for his cigarette, it was as though he had looked into a mirror. He had seen himself, disguised as a tramp, to be sure, but himself as clearly as though he were standing in his own room looking upon his own reflection. Feature for feature it was himself that he had looked at. Impossible? He had told himself that it was, that he was surely going mad to imagine such an absurdity. And yet he had known that he was not mad, that he was seeing with eyes which must make no mistake, that from among the millions of men upon the earth there had come to him the one who was as much like him physically as one pea is like another. And he had seen his chance, and had taken it.

The man who said that his name was John Rand was rushed to New York in a big police car, handcuffed, with a heavy policeman upon each side. He had a temper, had John Rand, and it flared out often and bitterly. He cursed them roundly and unsparingly for a pack of fools, dolts, ninnies, blockheads, everything he could put his tongue to. He insisted that at least they look in the freight yards for the man whom he swore he had left there, and he flew into a towering rage when they shrugged their shoulders and laughed at him. And finally he grew silent, seeing that his angry explosions were taken in mere good nature and with a certain admiration of the way he was "playing his rôle."

"When we get to the city," he had ended significantly, "there will be men called in who know Jasper Ruud. And then, my dear brass-buttoned little heroes, you are going to know what it feels like to have

all New York laughing at its country police!"

Captain Hudson, the chief of the local police, who could not deny himself the pleasure of escorting his prisoner in person, smiled and nodded approvingly. He knew that his capture was going to be the sensation of the day, that the newspapers from coast to coast and upon the other side of the Atlantic would grow garrulous with word of the taking of the multi-millionaire, and that his own name would appear in printed letters more times within the next forty-eight hours than it had ever done before. It is not every day that a man who is a power in Wall Street flees so wildly from an angry justice, not every day that it falls to the lot of a rural officer to control for a little the destiny of a man who daily controlled tens of thousands of his fellow beings.

He had telephoned the news immediately to Mr. McAdams, the district attorney, and had had his first thrill from the tone of suppressed surprise of that gentleman, who was very much used to surprises. And while the automobile swept on, with John Rand at last silent and for the present resigned, Captain Hudson dreamed dreams of swift promotion.

They turned into upper Broadway at One Hundred and Twenty-eighth Street while the clocks were booming the first hour after midnight.

"It's an unpleasant duty, Mr. Ruud," Hudson was saying, well-disposed towards the whole world, with all men and women in it, "but we are going to make it as easy for you as we can. We are going to take you straight to McAdams."

"The district attorney?"

"Yes. You will spend the night at his home. You see, Mr. Ruud, we all realize that the whole thing is unfortunate, and that—oh, well, we

don't look on you as a common criminal."

"Thanks," drily. "May I ask why the distinction?"

"Why, you certainly see it yourself. A man of your position . . ."

"That's so. I'd forgotten. Jasper Ruud has money, a lot of money, hasn't he? And influence, political influence?"

"When you begin to remember again," chuckled Hudson, "that ought to be clear to you. Since there's not a boy on the street who doesn't know that you put McAdams in office!"

"Humph!" was Rand's sole answer. And nothing further was said until the car drew up before a two-storied, square, rich-looking residence set back a little from the street in its conventionally pretty grounds. Hudson sprang down lightly, his two policemen with him, and the three with John Rand in their midst hastened along the shrub-bordered walk to the wide front doors. Before Hudson's outstretched hand had found the bell the door was flung open and in the bright light rushing out stood a man in slippers and dressing-gown. His face looked worried and there was a certain air of nervousness in his manner.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Ruud, sorry," he said quickly. "Come in." He put out his hand and noticed the handcuffs. "Hudson," he cried sharply, swinging about suddenly. "What the devil does this mean? Didn't Mr. Ruud give himself up? Take those confounded things off! But come in first, come in, all of you."

They went into a wide hallway and McAdams slammed the door shut and locked it. And then in the splendidly appointed library, with shades low drawn, he turned again to Hudson.

"Who have you got with you? Jennings and Condon? Now, boys,

you two can go into the room across the hall there. You'll find cigars and a little lunch. We'll let you know when we want you. Hudson, for God's sake, take those cursed things off!"

Hudson jerked out his key and unlocked the handcuffs. Rand opened his mouth to speak, but was interrupted by McAdams.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Ruud," he said again. "But you're going to be comfortable for the night. Sit down. Here's your favorite chair." He dragged the biggest, softest leather chair up to the table. "What a night you've had!" He drew decanter and glasses to the edge of the table and threw back the lid of a box of cigars. "Help yourself to some Scotch and a cigar and then we'll talk."

For the first time since he had met the stranger in the freight yards the humor of the whole thing struck John Rand and he laughed.

"Do you know," he said, as he poured his whiskey, "it's rather fun to be arrested, when everyone is so courteous about it! I had never imagined it would be like this to be arrested for murder. Your very good health, Mr. McAdams."

The three men sat down and for a little there was silence while they lighted their cigars. And then McAdams, leaning forward, said quietly:

"It's too bad, the whole thing's too bad. You shouldn't have made a bolt that way. But now . . . well, we'll see what's to be done." He drummed, frowning, upon the table with his finger nails. And then, jerking his head up suddenly, "What's this that Hudson was trying to tell me over the telephone, about your being beaten and robbed by thugs?"

Rand smiled. He began to be a little sorry for the police captain. The fellows were so cocksure, and



now when he had told his story to the district attorney—

"The whole thing is a wretched mistake, Mr. McAdams," he said quietly. "I," with a grin, "feel like a thief, accepting your hospitality under false pretences! You see, I had just swung down from an east-bound freight car. I ran across a man in the yards who showed me a crushed hand, and who told me that he had been beaten and robbed, and who said further that his name was Jasper Ruud. It was the first time that I had ever seen the gentleman, and in the poor light of the yards I scarcely saw him then. It happens that I am not Jasper Ruud at all, but a mere ordinary man and my name is John Rand."

Captain Hudson's keen eyes twinkled through his cigar smoke. Rand's air was quietly matter-of-fact, as he was certain now of being believed. McAdams's look of worry deepened.

The district attorney got to his feet and walked up and down the room, frowning. Suddenly he whirled upon Hudson.

"Would you mind, my dear Captain," he barked out, "going in and showing your men how to open bottles properly? I want to talk with Mr. Ruud. Oh, I'll be responsible to you for his safety."

If the dreams which Captain Hudson had dreamed of promotion and a desirable berth in the city were to come true it was well to do a favor for the city's prosecuting attorney. With no slightest hesitation he went out, closing the door behind him. McAdams came quickly to where Rand sat.

"Look here, Jasper," he said gently, but none the less emphatically. "Here's the very devil of a mess you've got yourself into with that fly-away temper of yours. And then running away on the top of it!" He

groaned. "And getting hauled back this way. I've got to prosecute you or quit. And if I quit the next fellow will make it all the harder for you. I can keep you from going to the chair—I'll do it if they run me out of town for it!—but, man, it looks like a long term in spite of everything we can do."

"You don't understand," expostulated Rand warmly. "I tell you I am not Ruud at all. Why won't you believe me? Send out for somebody who knows the man, and they'll tell you—"

"That's all right to talk that kind of stuff before those fellows," cut in McAdams sharply. "But drop it with me. You're not trying to play insane, are you?"

"Damn it!" Rand, too, was on his feet, his anger flaring out again. "I tell you that I'm not the man you want. Why don't you get someone to come who knows me?"

"Don't I know you as well as any man in the world, Jasper?"

Rand blinked at him, speechless for a second.

"You know me? You've seen Ruud and—"

McAdams laughed shortly. "Since we belong to the same club, since we went to college together, since you are the best friend I've got or ever had or ever expect to have, I guess I do know you!"

Rand sank back into his chair weakly. "You'll begin to make me think that I don't know who I am," he muttered. And then, upon his feet again, "Look at me, McAdams. Look closely. Maybe I look a lot like Jasper Ruud, but I can't be exactly like him. My nose, isn't it different? Or my eyes? Or my hair? Or something?"

McAdams stared at him, wonderingly, shaking his head.

"I tell you it's all right before the others. Do what you please. But



to me, Jasper—don't you trust me?"

"I tell you," sternly, "that I am no more Jasper Ruud than you are. I'm John Rand, and I'm just in from South America. There is some likeness, I suppose. But you'll make a fool of yourself if you think of trying me in court as Jasper Ruud. There'll be dozens of men—"

"Have you seen your lawyers? Is it some scheme of theirs? Oh, well," his voice showing a little hurt, "it's up to you. Only let me tell you something. New York is tired of having men play insane and get away with it, dead tired. It's a rich man's dodge . . . and juries are as a general thing only too happy when they get the chance to hand it to their rich brother. Why," his voice dropping very low again, "don't you make it self-defence? You've got a chance there."

Rand had felt anger at the mistake and had felt amusement at it. Now he began to feel the first vague stirrings of alarm.

"The whole thing is incredible, Mr. McAdams," he said finally. "That one man should look so much like another that a man who claims to be the best friend of one of them fails to see the difference. But there are these likenesses now and then in a thousand years, I suppose. And there must be someone— Has Jasper Ruud any very near relatives? People who see him daily?"

"Still stick to it, do you?" demanded McAdams stiffly. "Very well. Yes," with mild sarcasm, "there is Mr. Jasper Ruud's sister, Audrey. She lives with him, and—"

"Telephone for her. There is the car outside. Send for her. She will tell you that you need to go to an eye specialist."

"It is after one o'clock—"

"An impolite hour to disturb a lady's slumbers. But I'm getting

tired of this. Will you send for her?"

McAdams strode across the room, jerked a telephone from its stand, and without turning to the directory called for a number.

"Miss Audrey," when at last he had gotten her, "I am sorry to have to disturb you at this time of night. This is Mr. McAdams. Your brother is here and—Yes, he wishes it. I'll send a car for you. It will be there in ten minutes. Thank you. Oh, he's all right. And will you bring a suit of his clothes, shoes, hat, everything? Mine won't fit him. Good-bye."

The clothes came, brought by a hurrying servant, before the sister of Jasper Ruud had had time to dress and follow. Rand, with a glance at himself in a mirror in McAdams' bedroom where the district attorney had gone with him, assured himself that at least he was entitled to something from Jasper Ruud for the night's adventure, and having washed the grime from his face and hands, began to dress. Meanwhile McAdams walked up and down, puffing furiously at his cigar, breaking out now and then into sharp protests at the ridiculous attempt of a man so well known as Jasper Ruud to even pretend to be somebody else.

The suit was the suit of a wealthy man, rather fond of dress. It was a luxury to put such garments on. Rand attired himself with a certain pleasure at being dressed like a gentleman again, fastened his tie with care, admired the fit of vest and coat and trousers . . . and then remembered his worn-out shoes. He sat down, kicked off his old ones, and began to draw on the new patent-leathers.

"Say, McAdams," he called, a suggestion of a laugh in his voice. "I want you to tell me something. You say you know Ruud well. Is he par-

ticular about his dress, or careless?"

"Particular?" McAdams grunted. "I'd say, my dear Jasper, that for a business man you are about the nearest thing to a dude I ever saw."

"And," went on Rand, gleefully, a shoe dangling from his hand, "you'd say that he wears clothes—and shoes—that fit him?"

"What do you mean?"

"Explain this!" Rand drew on one shoe, laced it, and stuck his foot out, shaking it back and forth. The shoe flapped upon his foot as though he had balanced it upon his toe, and dropped off. It was clearly a size too big.

"What's happened to my feet?" he chuckled, into McAdams's puzzled face. "If I'm Ruud, why don't my shoes fit me?"

The prominence that had come to McAdams in the legal world had come because he had made himself a great lawyer. And the quick light in his eyes now, as he went down on both knees in front of Rand, seizing the foot with the shoe which did not fit, showed that his lawyer's soul had seen a bit of evidence. He got to his feet again in a moment, his brows dragged down in a puzzled frown, his lips pursed.

"A man's feet don't shrink overnight so that his shoes fall off," he said thoughtfully. "And Jasper Ruud's shoes fitted him yesterday, because I saw him walk into the club with them on!" He shook his head. "Jasper, will you give me your word of honor that you haven't seen your lawyers?"

"I give you my word of honor," chuckled Rand, "that I haven't seen anybody's lawyers!"

"Then this is your own idea." Again he pursed his lips, again he shook his head. "I never heard of such a thing. Do you hope to prove that you are not yourself just because your shoes don't fit you?"

"How does it happen, though?" challenged Rand. "You say that Ruud always wears his clothes like a dude—is it natural that he should have shoes a mile too big?"

"That particular pair doesn't fit," retorted McAdams significantly. "But the others—"

"Bring 'em all on! Get every shoe in the house. And when you see that they are all too large, what then?" triumphantly.

"Then," snapped McAdams tersely, "it will be up to me to find where you hid the old ones, and who got the new ones for you!"

The bell at the front door jangled. Rand put on the ill-fitting shoes and followed McAdams into the library. And in a moment Audrey Ruud came in.

John Rand started. And for a fresh, vital reason he thanked his stars again that he was not Jasper Ruud. For then he would have been this girl's brother.

No, she was not the kind of a girl a man would want to have for a sister. A slip of a girl who had not yet scamped through her teens, all pink and white freshness; all delicate, dainty girlishness, bringing with her a feeling that it was May-time in the world. John Rand, pausing suddenly, saw the vision of her in gay-colored cloak and scarf which hid the hastiness of her dressing and the confusion of her quickly piled hair. And then he saw the flash of her white arms, and felt them warm and soft about his neck.

"Dear old Coots!" she cried softly, laying her cheek against his, her hand in his hair. "Poor, dear old Coots! And now—"

"Look here!" John Rand, after a moment in which he forgot himself, forgot all things, drew her arms away and held her back from him. "You're making a mistake. I'm—"

McAdams laughed.

"Do you mind saying, Miss Audrey," he asked, still laughing, "who this gentleman is?"

"Why, it's Jasper, of course!" She turned wide, wondering eyes upon the two men. "Just old Cootsie!"

"Look at me," commanded Rand, growing angry again. "I'm not Jasper Ruud at all. I'm John Rand. Can't you see?"

She drew her hands away from him and looked at him steadily. And then she looked at McAdams, and again at Rand, frowning a little.

"What is it?" she asked, turning to Rand finally. "Why do you say that?"

"Because it's the truth," he blurted out. "I may look like your brother but—"

"You see," interrupted McAdams, "Jasper has decided to try to prove that he isn't himself, that he is somebody else! And in court—"

The girl laughed, the flash of her dimples temptingly near John Rand.

"It isn't going to court!" she cried gaily, taking in her two hands the lapels of Rand's coat—Ruud's coat—and turning Rand about, making him face her. "The doctors just telephoned to me, just before I left the house. That great specialist performed an operation and Lon Kelton didn't die at all! And he isn't going to die! So, you poor dear old Coots, you don't have to pretend to be somebody else any more! Lon Kelton will take ten thousand dollars and forget the whole thing. And all you have to do," slipping her arm into his, with a quick little squeeze, "is just come right home with me!"

### III

IT was all confusion to John Rand. He knew that they had gone into a night court; he knew that his lawyers, Jasper Ruud's lawyers, had ap-

peared; and that there had been money spent. He had heard something about a warrant for a man's murder being no warrant at all when the man who was supposed to have been murdered hadn't died, but was sitting up eating soft-boiled eggs. It appeared that a case of assault with a billiard cue was a matter which with money and management might be relegated to the domain of things of no moment. All of this and the scores of considerations by the way merged into a kaleidoscopic chaos. And one thing, one thing only was perfectly clear and simple—and stupefying!

There were the lights of the court; there sat the judge whose gravity had been for once disturbed. Yonder was an automobile with whirring motor from which District Attorney McAdams and Jasper Ruud's attorneys were waving their hats to him, across the street curved another car carrying Captain Hudson and his retainers back up the river, and at his side, her hand pressing his arm, was the most tantalizingly lovely maiden he had ever set his eyes upon. In her delight at the happy ending of the day's tragedy she had, openly and shamelessly, hugged him in the very face of the judge. And now she was saying coaxingly:

"Here's our car, Cootsie. It's dreadfully late. Let's hurry home!"

John Rand hesitated and selected his words carefully before he spoke. He had denied so much to-night, and so frantically and so earnestly, that he scarcely dared deny again. Nobody believed him, no one would listen seriously to him.

"We'll get into the machine," he said gravely. "And we'll drive around a little, to the park, anywhere. I want to talk with you."

She looked up at him curiously.

"It's nearly four o'clock," she said, gently. "And after a day like this

... oh, you must be tired to death!"

"I want to talk with you," he insisted. And with another quick glance into his eyes she pulled her gay-colored cloak close about her slim young body and hurried to the car.

Now, in the roomy comfort of the tonneau with one heavy rug drawn over their knees, with the girl insisting on nestling close to him, her hand seeking for his, John Rand began his explanation. He did not want to accuse her brother of the thing that Jasper Ruud had done, he did not want to show her that if her brother were not guilty of murder he was none the less guilty of a cowardly and mean action. So he said nothing about the meeting in the freight yards. But he told her how he had gone to the police station and how he had been seized, how the whole thing was an absurd mistake, how he was John Rand, a mining engineer but lately returned from South America, how he had lost what money he had there, and being anxious to get on to New York had "beat his way." How, in a word, he was a rather reckless young man with large hopes in his heart and big holes in his pockets. And, he hurried on to his conclusion, her brother was all right and would show up within a few hours and—

And when he finished and turned to her, the little squeeze which she gave his hand and the tender, half reproachful look in her eyes told him that she hadn't believed a word he had said.

"Jasper, old boy," she said with a little laugh which was all full of quivers, "you've had an awfully bad day. It has been enough to do you all up. And now you're coming straight home, and have a hot toddy and go to bed. Tom," quickly to the chauffeur, "home!"

"Home, nothing!" cried Rand. "Let me out first!"

"Home, Tom!" very emphatically from Miss Audrey Ruud.

"But," snapped Rand impolitely and with no intention of being polite, "I can't go home with you this way. I'm not your brother, hang it! I'm not even a married man, and what would people say when the truth came out?"

"We don't care about people, Jasper, dear—and, Tom, hurry!"

Rand flung aside the lap robe. "I'm going to get out," he said shortly. "If he doesn't slow up I'll probably break my neck!"

"Hurry, Tom! He won't jump. He's just—just bub-bub-bluffing!"

She was sobbing wretchedly, and both arms were again around Rand's neck.

"I'll go," he told her suddenly, taking her arms away. "Only I'd be much obliged if you could manage to pick up a chaperone somewhere."

"Mum-mama's there," he made out her choking voice to say, "And she can chaperone us, can't she?"

And then she laughed a little and cried a little and John Rand told himself that he wasn't going to hurt her again or frighten her, let the consequences be what they might.

Tom, knowing dimly that something was amiss and clearly that it was late and he was sleepy, sent his machine along merrily through the quiet streets and to the Ruud mansion on the Drive. Rand got down and gave his hand to the girl. Until the last minute he was tempted to break and run for it, but knowing that she already feared for her brother's sanity and that he must humor her now or hurt her, let her hand cling to his arm and went with her up the broad steps. A servant flung the door open, bowing gravely as though the Ruud home had not been in the turmoil of terror since



morning, and informed them quietly, as though they were just returning from the theater, that a supper was waiting for them in the little dining-room.

"Come on," coaxed Audrey Ruud, "let's get something to eat. And don't make a noise. Mama's upstairs and she'd only scold you if she came down. Come on," dragging at his arm. "You must be just starved, Cootsie!"

John Rand planted his feet widely and stubbornly apart.

"I'll come on just one condition," he said emphatically. "And that is that you don't call me 'Cootsie' any more! I don't like it!"

"All right, Jas—"

"And don't call me Jasper. That's worse than Cootsie. Call me John Rand—because," with a final attempt to make his stand firm, "because that's my name."

"Then, John Rand, dear, come with me to get something to eat!"

And John Rand, dear, went.

She seated him in his own particular chair . . . he knew that it was his own particular chair because she told him that it was . . . she sent the servant away and waited on him herself. She fluttered about him with her hair down in a thick brown braid across each shoulder, and in a gossamery, filmy, lacy "thing"—she had flung her gay-colored cloak upon a chair—that he was very much afraid was not quite a proper thing to wear before a young gentleman whom she had just met. But it was very pretty for all that, and he could not again insist that he was not her brother, so he tried not to look too much at her. She made him a hot toddy . . . the way he liked it, as she also told him . . . and poured his coffee and set fruit and cold meats before him. And then she climbed up on top of the table, and taking her own cup of coffee in her

hand, watched him while he ate.

Now she was the gayest, and the tenderest little body he had ever dreamed of. And he was suddenly happy, happy just to be with her, and suddenly glad that the whole thing had happened. She would learn after a while that she had made a mistake, and she might be sorry that she had hugged him before the court. But he would know her and he would make her forget the embarrassing portions of their evening, and she would remember that he had tried hard and persistently not to take advantage of her. So he drank his toddy to her good health and young beauty, and ate his cold meats and had his cigarette in almost untroubled enjoyment.

"And now, Coot—" she caught his eye and changed it quickly to "John Rand, dear—don't you feel a whole lot better?"

He leaned back and smiled at her.

"I do. I feel like a white man again. That's the first real meal I've had since I left San Francisco."

She put down her own cup, clasped her hands about her knees, and looked at him intently. He knew what she was thinking. And he was not surprised when she said gently:

"Now I'm going to make you go right straight to bed. You're all tired out. And we'll have breakfast together, a late breakfast." She slipped down from the table. "Come on, Coot—John Rand, dear. I'll go with you and see if everything is all comfy for you."

So they went upstairs, John Rand following, Audrey flitting ahead and flinging open the door of Jasper Ruud's bedroom. She threw back the covers of the bed for him, laid his bathrobe across the back of a chair, placed his slippers for him by the fireplace, put cigarettes and matches on the little table by the bed . . . even turned on the water in the



bath. And then she came back to him and stood before him, her rosy face lifted wistfully to his.

"Good night—and go to sleep right away like a good old boy. And aren't you going to kiss me good night?"

For a wonderful tantalizing second he hesitated. And then he turned his eyes away from her.

"Audrey Ruud," he said, almost sternly to keep from saying it entirely sentimentally, "you are driving me to distraction. I'd rather kiss you good night than own the Great Golconda. And—"

"Then why don't you do it?" coaxingly.

"Because I haven't any right to. Because I'm a sort of a sheep in wolf's clothing. Because—oh, just because my name is John Rand." And then quickly, as he saw the distress coming back into her eyes: "Will you explain to me why my shoes don't fit me?"

He held out towards her a foot with its loose shoe, shaking it back and forth as he had done for McAdams, until the shoe dropped off. And she laughed at him.

"You great big goose! Is that what's bothering you? I was in such a hurry, and I couldn't find anything—and those shoes are Talcott, the butler's!"

She wafted him a kiss from the tips of her fingers and the door closed behind her. And John Rand searched feverishly until he found a pair of Ruud's shoes. They fitted him like a glove made to order. Seeing nothing else for it he plunged into his hot bath, tumbled into bed and went to sleep.

#### IV

JOHN RAND awoke as the little clock upon the mantel was striking nine. He reached out to the

table and took a cigarette. Then he lay back among his pillows, smoked in genuine, relaxed comfort, and sought the solution of the puzzle which the most high gods of chance had set before him. And at last he thought that he had found it. He would dress, go downstairs and slip quietly out of the house. A little later he would be missed, but before they could worry long about him the real Jasper Ruud would have come home. For certainly the morning papers would have the whole story, and there would no longer be a reason for Jasper Ruud's remaining in hiding from the arm of the law.

He hummed a little to himself as he had his cold plunge and dressed. To be sure he was going to give up seeing Audrey Ruud for a little, but since he had determined already that he was coming back to see her again and to know her, even that did not break the morning song. Then he went to the door—and found it locked.

"I might have guessed it," he muttered. "That poor little girl thinks I'm not just right yet, and she isn't taking any chances."

So he sat down and had another cigarette, and was not exactly disappointed. For it would be pleasant to breakfast with her.

"What am I to call you this morning?" she asked from the doorway, as she stood smiling in at him, key in hand. "Are you going to be Cootsie again?"

He dropped his cigarette into the ash tray and came forward to meet her, with a smile to match hers.

"I'm sorry, Miss Ruud—"

"My name hasn't changed over night. It's Audrey, if you please."

"I'm sorry, Audrey, but I don't like Cootsie any more in the morning than in the evening. And," gravely, "my name really is John Rand, you know."

She sighed a little, quickly hid the sigh with a smile and held out her hand to him.

"Let's go down to breakfast. I'm starved, as usual. And Mama has already eaten and gone out somewhere. She left word for you that you ought to be ashamed of yourself."

"I am." But none the less he caught her fingers and holding them ran down the stairs with her and into the breakfast-room.

Her hair was piled high upon her head this morning, a big white rose set fragrantly in it. He noted the fact approvingly as he sat across the table from her. He noted, too, that she was dressed in a light gauzy morning gown that was very becoming to her saucy beauty, observed that the general color scheme was a light blue, realized that this was the first time in his life he had ever concerned himself with the matter of a young woman's costume, saw that her throat was unbelievably sweet to look upon and that her arms in their short sleeves were as round and plump and white as a baby's. And before he had made mental note of these things he had again fallen in love with the soft gray tenderness of her eyes.

And now they were breakfasting merrily. Making no reference to the thing which had brought its shadow yesterday she chatted about a score of little matters with which he was supposed to be conversant. And not to bring the look of pain again into her eyes he tried to comprehend, asking no questions, and did his best to talk sensibly of people whom he had never seen, of whom he had never heard. And then, as they were finishing, there came an interruption.

"Mr. Warrington," announced a servant from the doorway. "To see Mr. Ruud."

"Who's Warrington?" asked Rand

quickly, turning to Audrey. "I'm not at home, am I?"

"Of course you are at home," she told him with emphasis. "It's *the* Mr. Warrington from Warrington and Stoddard."

"Oh," said Rand. He remembered that he had learned last night that Warrington and Stoddard were Jasper Ruud's attorneys.

Mr. Warrington came in smiling and bowing and radiating good humor.

"Miss Ruud, good morning. Good morning, Ruud." He put out his hand, grasping Rand's warmly. "My congratulations."

"Thanks," replied Rand drily. "You're just in time for a cup of coffee with us."

Mr. Warrington was duly grateful but altogether too taken up with the object of his morning call to think of such a thing. But he sat down and explained.

It was all right, everything was all right. The rubbing of his hands together told that as well as did his words. Lon Kelton was every bit as good as a new man this morning. And Mr. Warrington had made it his business to learn a great deal about Lon Kelton's business. The gambler had recently sustained heavy losses, the police had closed three houses belonging to him, and he needed money. He needed it immediately. That was the beauty of it. He was willing, he was eager, announced Mr. Warrington triumphantly, to forget the whole thing as soon as Mr. Ruud paid him a certain sum of money.

"And may I ask," interrupted Rand, looking thoughtfully into his cup, "how much money the gentleman thinks is due him?"

"He asked twenty-five thousand," chuckled Mr. Warrington. "But I laughed at him and told him we would fight it, that it was absurd.

And in the end he agreed to take ten thousand and call it square." Mr. Warrington's eyelid closed shrewdly over his left eye. "And I'd pay that ten thousand quick, Mr. Ruud. Before he gets to talking with a lawyer about it!"

"We'll see about it," answered Rand after a moment. "In a day or so—"

"In a day or so!" Mr. Warrington banged the table with his fist and then asked Miss Ruud's pardon for it. "Now is the time to pay it, I tell you. Why, in a day or so when a pack of unprincipled pettifoggers gets hold of him he'll ask you for fifty thousand!"

"But if I haven't that much money?" demanded Rand irritably.

Mr. Warrington opened his eyes roundly and stared. And then he laughed.

"You will have your joke! But, seriously, Mr. Ruud—"

"Haven't I told you that my name is Rand?" snapped the young gentleman, whose temper now and then would get away from him.

Mr. Warrington took off his nose-glasses, puffed his breath at them, wiped them and stuck them back on his nose. And then he looked rather pleadingly at Audrey. She was biting her lips to keep back the tears.

"Oh, very well," went on Rand more pacifically. "Let us suppose for the moment that I don't know what I am talking about, that I really am Jasper Ruud. Sooner or later you are going to make me think so myself. And let us suppose that for some reason best known to myself I cannot and will not pay anybody ten thousand dollars to-day. Then what?"

Again Mr. Warrington looked helplessly at Audrey. And it was Audrey who answered the question.

"In such a case," she said quietly, "when it is a matter of so small a

sum, I am sure that Mr. Warrington himself will advance the money. Won't you, Mr. Warrington—please—for my sake?"

"I don't understand," began Mr. Warrington, hesitantly. And then catching the pleading glance which Audrey sent to him while Rand was again staring into his cup. "Certainly I'll be glad to pay the money to Kelton and take his receipt. It will perhaps—er—save trouble. And now," upon his feet, his watch in his hand, his smile once more summoned back to hide his vague uneasiness, "I'll be hurrying on. There's no time like the present, you know. *Good morning*, Miss Ruud. *Good morning*, Ruud."

And he was gone rather hastily.

"And now—" began Audrey.

"And now," Rand smiled at her anxious face, "I must be going downtown for a while. I have a little business and—"

She got up and came around the table, taking his lapels into her hands as she had done last night.

"You're not going a single step, I promise you," she said very much as though she meant it, "unless you give me your solemn word of honor to come back. To come back soon, before luncheon."

"You are afraid that I'll run away?" jestingly.

But she would not joke with him. "I want you to promise, to give me your word of honor. And then, whether you are Jasper Ruud or John Rand, I'll believe you."

"I'll come back," soberly. "And here's my hand on it. What's more, I don't mind telling you that I'm not going to run away now or later. I'm going to stay and see the thing out."

She was satisfied then and he went down the walk to the street, stopping at the gate to wave his hat to the trim little form in the doorway. He

swung on to a passing street car and the conductor touched his hat and said, "Good morning, Mr. Ruud." He rode aimlessly downtown and got off when he saw a boy crying the morning papers. He glanced over the headlines upon the front page, gathered swiftly that it was all there, the capture of the millionaire fugitive, his denial of himself, the appearance in the night court, the news that Lon Kelton was declared out of danger.

He put the paper in his pocket and walked on to the little square a block ahead. Passing a florist's shop he turned in and ordered a great, big armful of violets sent to Audrey. And he called for a card and wrote his name, "John Rand" on it and put it with the flowers. And paying for them he remembered for the first time that day the roll of greenbacks which had been given to him last night in the freight yards and returned to him by McAdams.

"I'm making wages out of it, anyway," he reflected, with a flicker of amusement.

In the little park he sat down for a cigarette and a quiet perusal of the account of the doings of last night. And he did not read them after all. For his wandering eye caught a short paragraph, put at the bottom of the page, and when he had read it he let the paper drop to the ground, confronted with a new dismay.

The body of a man, well-dressed, wearing a long overcoat, had been found in the freight yards near Yonkers in the early morning. The man would never be identified as he had been struck by a speeding engine, and his body terribly mutilated.

"My God!" muttered Rand hoarsely, staring out across the square and seeing nothing of it. "It's Ruud—and he's dead! What becomes of me?"

## V

FOR a little he sat staring dizzily and stupidly into nothingness. And then he sprang to his feet and rushed away in search of a telephone. He called up the Yonkers morgue and asked for particulars. They were as the papers had given them. He swallowed hard and then asked:

"Was there anything in the pockets?" There was not. "Was there . . . was there in the overcoat the name of the tailor who had made it?" Yes. The coat was made by fashionable New York tailors, by Cartwright and Hammonds. Did he know— But John Rand clicked up the receiver, and went out into the streets again, his face white. The clothes he had on had been made by Cartwright and Hammonds.

He wandered long up and down, seeking the thing which he must do, and finding no light glimmering through the fog about him. With the real Jasper Ruud dead, what was left for John Rand to do? Had Ruud lived, sooner or later he would have come back, and then when the two men stood up, side by side, people would know, Audrey would know. But now? They were ready to believe him insane. And if he continued to deny that he was the great millionaire, and the millionaire was never to come back, they would go on from suspicion to certainty. He even thought with a shudder of the mad house!

And if he went away, if he disappeared from the world of Jasper Ruud, what then? Audrey would be broken-hearted . . . He went no further on that tack. And if he went back to Ruud's home and allowed them to make him continue to play the part of Ruud, what then? Then Audrey would go on thinking him her brother, would go on calling him



Cootsie—and John Rand doubled both fists and swore, aloud and fluently. And in the end, having decided nothing, he knew that he had promised to return for lunch, called a passing taxicab, and drove moodily back to the home of the man who had made all of these complications for him.

They were just sitting down to the table, Audrey and a little old lady with silvery gray hair and eyes like Audrey's, only naturally not so pretty. The gray-haired old lady looked him over with cold censure in her eye, and lifted a cheek coldly for him to kiss. He stooped and kissed it. Audrey, a big bunch of violets at her breast, held up a pair of red, warm lips for him to kiss. And he kissed them. And he saw that as he sat down the color was running hotly up into Miss Audrey's cheeks.

"You are late, Jasper," remarked Mrs. Ruud with unmistakable iciness in her tone.

"I am sorry, Mrs.—Mother," he hastened to say, busying himself with his napkin.

"And," she went on, without a change of tone or of expression, as she looked steadily and frowningly at him, "I am very much displeased with you."

"Mama," began Audrey.

"Hush, child. You must not interrupt when I am talking to your brother about serious matters." She tasted her consommé critically and went on. "Very much displeased. To hit a gambler on the head with a billiard cue was enough to disgrace the name your father left you. And then to run away and try to disguise yourself in old, dirty clothes was worse. I shall not again refer to the matter. But I want you to remember that I am very much disappointed in you."

"Accidents," began Rand, feeling that it was up to him to say some-

thing—but Mrs. Ruud's voice again cut in bleakly:

"We will drop the subject, Jasper. I am sure that it is not one we would care to discuss in the presence of servants. Talcott, you need not serve Mr. Ruud any wine for his luncheon. He does not need it."

Rand ate little in the uncomfortable silence. He felt that Mrs. Ruud's eyes were waiting for him to lift his that she might look some more of the things which she was not going to say in Talcott's presence; he knew that Audrey was watching him curiously. And he was eager to get to his feet when the old lady laid aside her napkin and folded her hands in her lap as a sign to Talcott's watchful eyes that she had finished. When she had carried her stately self in stately manner from the dining-room, he sank back into his chair and lighted a cigarette and glanced at Audrey.

"A little wine now, Mr. Ruud, sir?" whispered Talcott at his elbow.

"No, thank you, Talcott. A glass of brandy, I think."

Rand had his brandy and went with Audrey to the darkened coolness of the library. About him everywhere was the quiet magnificence of a home that was a mansion. There were rare paintings, exquisite bits of furniture scarcely less the masterpieces of great artists. And he had but to put out his hand and say, "It is mine," and it would be his in sober earnest. And with it would come to him the countless millions of money, money in gold and banknotes, in holdings in vast enterprises. He had but to say, "I am Jasper Ruud," and he would be to all intents and purposes Jasper Ruud. And then his eyes turned to the slip of a girl standing with her back to him, gazing out upon the wide lawns—and he frowned. Here was the most wonderfully exquisite master-



piece of the greatest Artist of all—and she would not be his, could in no way become his. For now, infinitely less than when the thought had first come to him, did he want her for a sister.

"I might be tempted," he mused. "God knows I might be tempted but for that. No, I've got to find the way out."

She turned suddenly and came back to him from the window.

"You haven't congratulated me," she said gently, reproachfully, he thought a bit strangely.

"On what particular thing? I know you are always to be congratulated on just being you. But—"

"On my birthday," she told him quickly. "Had you forgotten that, too? Don't you remember that I am eighteen to-day?"

"I—I didn't know—or I had forgotten. I am sorry. And I do congratulate you and wish you—"

"And," she went on, "I didn't forget. I remembered that you told me to buy my own present. And I did!"

"May I ask what you chose worthy of so wonderful a day?"

She looked at him strangely. "Don't you remember? You told me to have the bill sent to you—" She broke off and ran to the library table where a number of unopened letters were scattered. One of them she tore open and from it took a yellow sheet of paper which she handed to him, not glancing at it. It was a bill from an automobile firm, and was for three thousand, seven hundred dollars!

"It's the most beautiful car you ever saw!" she assured him.

"I—I don't doubt it," he laughed at her. "I . . . I'll attend to it." And he thrust the bill into his pocket.

"But I promised them the money this morning. Will you write the check now? And—and I've gone and gotten into debt again, for dress-

es and things. Will you write me a check, too, for . . . for another thousand dollars?"

"I say," he expostulated. "You're taking my breath away. To be sure one is eighteen only once in a lifetime—but four thousand, seven hundred dollars—"

"Stingy!" she taunted him. "And when you had told me to go as far as I liked!"

He took the roll of bills from his pocket.

"There's pretty nearly a thousand here—"

"But I don't want it in money. I'd lose it before I got downtown." She crossed to a little desk in the corner and brought him a check book. "Now. Will you make it payable—"

"I can't do it," he told her positively. "I'm sorry. I'd like to, and I don't want to spoil your birthday. But it's impossible."

"Why?" she challenged him. "Why? Why? Why?"

Why? Because if he signed Jasper Ruud's name to a check it would be plain forgery. And Rand, who had barely escaped going before a New York jury for murder had no desire to appear upon a charge of forgery.

"I can't do it." His voice was regretful but stubbornly determined.

"Why?" And when he did not answer she flung another question at him. "Why don't you read your mail? There are yesterday's letters and this morning's. Why don't you read them?"

Another penitentiary offense, tampering with other people's mail!

"Because—" he began, but her swift torrent of accusation cut him short.

"Because you're afraid to! Because if you write a check it will be forgery and if you open Jasper Ruud's letters it will be another crime. Because—" she slipped

quickly behind the table, away from him, and while she accused boldly he saw that her eye was upon the open door. "Because you are an impostor! You are not Jasper Ruud! And where is my brother? What have you done with him?"

"Not Jasper Ruud? When did you—"

"You look like him—a little bit—not so very much!" she flung at him. "You are not half so good looking! And you are b-bad looking, wicked looking. I guessed it this morning when the violets came. Cootsie never sent me a flower in his life! I was sure of it when you came in to lunch. I was more than sure when—when you k-kissed me—that way!"

"Why then did you put up your lips that way? If you thought I was not your brother?"

"Just to see," very loftily, "if you had *any* principles left. And I found that you had none."

"I warned you that if you went on tempting me—"

"That is no excuse at all. And besides it doesn't matter, as I have forgotten all about it. What does matter is, *What did you do with Jasper Ruud?*"

"I didn't do anything with him. And I'm not an impostor. You will remember that I didn't come here because I wanted to, but because you brought me!"

"That was because I thought that you were Cootsie—"

"I told you all the time that I wasn't—"

"That was because you knew I wouldn't believe you. Just so that if you were caught, as you are now, you could have a hole to crawl out of! You just took a mean advantage."

"If you will pause to think, Miss Ruud," he tried to say with stiff dignity, "you will remember that

none of this was because I willed it. I was arrested and—"

"But," she flashed at him, "didn't you go right straight to the police station so that you could be arrested?"

"It's likely," he jerked out angrily, "that I'd do a thing like that, isn't it? Go get myself arrested, pretending to be a man whom the police were seeking, to be tried for murder!"

"Jasper didn't commit murder, if you please! And it's cowardly of you to even suggest that poor old Cootsie would do a thing like that."

"Well," he responded as quietly as he could, "I haven't been wearing Cootsie's shoes all this time because I've wanted to. And I'm perfectly willing to go—"

"But you can't. Not until you've told me what you did to him. If you try to, I'll—I'll have you arrested."

"Again? And for what this time, pray?"

"For being an impostor! For trying to steal Jasper Ruud's fortune."

"But haven't I said all the time that I wasn't Jasper Ruud? How can they arrest me? And you know they won't anyway. If you accuse me of such a thing—well, they'll just think that insanity runs in the family!"

"I know it." She sank weakly into her chair, staring helplessly at him. "They all think you are Jasper. Even Mama thinks so."

"Don't cry," he pleaded. "I'm sorry. I'll do whatever I can. I'll go away and . . ."

"But that won't do any good. What I want to know is where poor old Cootsie is?"

He opened his mouth to blurt out what he had seen in the morning paper. And then he snapped it shut with a click of the teeth. Could he tell her the truth now, that her brother had been killed, terribly

mangled, but a few hours ago?

"You are hiding something!" She had seen his expression and knew that he had been on the point of telling her something. "What is it? Where is he?"

"I—I don't know," he replied, lamely enough.

"You—you haven't hurt him?" she asked fearfully. "You," and her voice trembled a little, "haven't killed him!"

"No! I swear to you, Miss Ruud, I haven't laid my hands on him. I haven't harmed him the least bit in the world."

There was a great deal of fervor in his tones, and they rang with sincerity. She sighed as though from suddenly relieved nerves.

"Then he'll come back—some time? Won't he? And—but what am I going to do in the meantime?"

"You mean?"

"I mean that Jasper promised me the most glorious birthday in the world. He said I could go and spend every cent I wanted to and he'd pay the bills. And—and I've bought that car and a whole lot of dresses and—I've promised them all that they would have their money to-day—and it's *more* than just four thousand and seven hundred dollars! What will I do?"

"If I could help! But all I have is just one thousand dollars." He offered it and she shook her head.

"You've just got to go on pretending to be Cootsie a little longer. Until he comes back," she insisted. "And you've got to write some checks, and sign them. And I'll promise to keep him from charging you with forgery."

"You're not serious! You know that I can't—"

"But you can. Oh, and you *must*! Listen, listen!" Her hands were a flutter of excitement. "I've gone and bought all those things! I've

had the most expensive gown of all altered! I've already used the car. And they won't take any of those things back. When you refuse to pay, what will they say, what will they think of me? It would be as if I was a thief!" She shuddered, and looked at him appealingly.

"I'll put them off," he suggested. "I'll tell them that in a few days I'll pay them."

"But they will want to know why Jasper Ruud can't pay his bills when they're due. And they'll begin to say things and they'll come after me—Why, Marshall & Forster hesitated about letting me have the things without an order from you. And it was that day you were in the country, and I told them you would pay them this morning, and—oh, if you don't they'll just know I was trying to cheat them! And they'll tell Mama, and you know—that is, Jasper knows—that she'll scold me and—You've just got to do it."

"It's forgery," began Jasper.

But he didn't finish. She came quickly from behind the table, forgetting to feel—or simulate—fear of him—and stood very near him, her eyes turned imploringly to his, her finger-tips brushing his coat sleeve.

"Please," she coaxed. "It won't be wrong, because Jasper meant me to have the money anyway. And he won't care when he comes back, and I'll tell him you did it to keep me from getting into trouble. And I'll make him let you go without prosecuting you for—for kidnapping him."

John Rand was after all a man of impulse. And already he had fought long enough against the first impulse to do something for her. If Ruud were dead, this would mean simply one more complication, and the answer to it must come with the answers to the other problems.

All of this was stirring vaguely somewhere in John Rand's subcon-

sciousness. The one thing which he realized fully, keenly, was that Audrey Ruud's bright young face was looking up into his, and that a little shadow of anxiety was creeping across it.

"Give me the check book," he said abruptly. "And give me a bit of cloth to bandage my hand. We'll play it's been hurt, and that will excuse a poor imitation of Ruud's signature. And I'll go to the bank, cash my own check, and go with you to pay your people!"

"Thank you, John Rand, dear!" She was all dimpling smiles again. "And I believe you did tell the truth, and that you didn't hurt old Cootsie, and that he's just hiding still because he's scared stiff!"

And John Rand drove away to the bank, with his right hand bandaged for him, feeling decidedly light-hearted for a man plotting a forgery.

## VI

FOR ten days John Rand, mining engineer, who had never at one time in his life owned a thousand dollars, had lived in the Rudd household, had been accepted as its head, and had found himself in the end fitting very comfortably into the shoes of a multi-millionaire. He could have run away, but he could not see in what way that would help matters, and it was more pleasant to stay where he was.

After that first day when he had driven to the bank and deliberately forged Jasper Ruud's name to checks amounting to nearly five thousand dollars, he had plunged recklessly and deeply into Ruud's financial affairs. He had attended two directors' meetings, he had made them explain matters to him, and he had voted as he thought wisest. He had seen Mr. Warrington, had learned that the attorney had paid Lon Kel-

ton the ten thousand dollars which were demanded as damages, and he had drawn ten thousand dollars from Jasper Ruud's account and had paid it over to the lawyer.

The man whom the flying engine had mangled in the Yonkers freight yards had been buried, unidentified. It seemed to John Rand that nothing, no possible happening, could throw him out of the position into which he was fitting more securely day by day, nothing beyond his own volition. And the tenth day of security, of influence and importance and affluence, was the most thoroughly wretched day John Rand had ever lived through. Because it had started out being the most wonderfully happy day he had ever known.

For he did not want Jasper Ruud's millions, he did not want to be influential and a millionaire. The thing that he wanted he could never have if he had these things. For to have them he must be Jasper Ruud, and therefore Audrey Ruud's brother.

To have been interested in the dainty beauty of Audrey Rudd when he first saw her at McAdams's home was but natural. That he should remain in the same house with her for ten days and remain merely interested was impossible. That he should eventually wake up to himself, and realize that he was thinking daily and nightly of the rarest, most radiantly wonderful girl in all the world was inevitable.

Mrs. Ruud had said that afternoon:

"Well, I must say, Jasper, that you and Audrey are becoming the most affectionate brother and sister I ever heard of. It's very praiseworthy, I am sure, a very lovely spectacle. But I think that Audrey could put a little more time on her books without its hurting her. And your business—"

She hadn't finished. There was



no need for her to do so. Audrey was sitting with eyes demurely downcast, John Rand's face was a flaming scarlet.

They had breakfasted together this morning, as usual, Audrey and "John Rand, dear." She had grumbled that she had a headache and didn't know what French grammars were good for, anyway. He had suggested a trip up the river in the new steam yacht. And they had not gotten home until late afternoon. John Rand had deliberately cut a meeting of the board of directors of the Eastern and Western Mining Corporation. Audrey had chosen to ignore that Mrs. Quinby Cushton was to call. It had been a day of blue sky, quietly lapping water, a keen, riotous wind from the ocean whispering adventurous things. A day of frolic and laughter and dream-building.

For no longer was Audrey concerned the least little bit about the continued absence of her brother. She had come to believe John Rand implicitly. She believed that Ruud had sent him to the police station . . . that she had learned from McAdams and she promptly put it down to Rand's credit that he had not told her—and that he had unwittingly been forced into playing the part of Ruud. And she confided to him why she was not worried at her brother's failure to return.

When Ruud was at the stage of his boyhood when he "gloried and drank deep" of the doings of the gallant heroes who gallop through the pages of those rare volumes with bright pictures on their paper covers, pictures of men with guns and masks and daggers, sold by book dealers at ten cents each, he had read to her and they had shivered together over the hair-raising exploits. And they had planned what they would do were they ever sought by the blood-

hounds of the law. Ruud would disguise himself as a sailor and he would take a ship around the Horn and to San Francisco. Then he would change his disguise, assume a blue shirt, big boots, a pick and shovel and beard, and would go up into the mountains of California where, according to the story books, each man attended to his own business, went by what name he pleased, and asked no questions.

"But," Rand had objected, "those were the plans of a boy. And your brother—"

"Has gone straight to California," she had maintained, smiling at him.

"But," came a second objection, "he must have seen the papers, must have known that he could come back."

"*Cherchez la femme!*" she laughed. "There's 'a lady, such a lady,' who lives in the mountains of California. Then seek the other woman . . . that's Mother! Mother has a very strong will, John Rand, dear. And mother doesn't like the lady in California. I'll bet you a box of candy and a ticket to the opera and what you please that Jasper Ruud has seen his chance to scamper away, skylarking and love-making without mother's knowing it! Anyway, he's as old in years as I am in experience," whereupon she looked very wise, "and he can take care of himself."

So it had been a wonderful day, cloudless and blue and rippling with sunshine. And now, because it had been so happy, such a bubbling, effervescent day, John Rand was utterly miserable. For, he reflected, Jasper Ruud was not coming back, for the simple reason that he was dead. And how was John Rand to win the one thing in the universe he wanted? To be sure, Audrey claimed now that he in no slightest way resembled Jasper Ruud. He

knew already that he loved her, he dared hope, as is the way with youth and love, that she would some day love him. And when that day came what should he do? For the world was all about them, and the world thought that it knew perfectly well that he and she were brother and sister.

"If," he grumbled to himself, "there were only a third man like Jasper Ruud, I'd look the world over for him and would give him the whole of Jasper Ruud's fortune, just so that I could take Audrey Ruud up into my arms and run away with her to some lost island in the far seas."

So this afternoon, sitting at the window of Jasper Ruud's private sitting-room, frowning out across the river, which had been so beautiful a thing a little while ago, and which now was as joyless as the Styx, John Rand gave himself up to the bitterness that welled up within him. He had just learned to the uttermost how undesirable a thing wealth could be when it brought with it the exclusion of Something Else. And he felt very much like cursing Jasper Ruud, not because he had set the police upon him in the first place, but because he had allowed himself to be run over and mangled by an engine.

Audrey broke suddenly into his black musings. She had flung his door open and from the threshold looked in at him, a great amusement dancing in her eyes.

"Will you do something for me?" He saw the mischief in her eyes and wondered what it might mean. "You have been so good to me, just like a really truly brother. Do you know, I'll be almost sorry when Jasper does come back!"

"I wouldn't be," he told her vehemently.

"Oh! You're getting tired of stay-

ing here? Of seeing so much of me—"

"As a sister, yes," bluntly.

She moved back a step, and he saw the color go running up into her cheeks. But she went on hurriedly.

"And since you've been so good I've prepared a little surprise for you! Will you go downstairs and see what's in the music-room? And I'll peek in at the keyhole and watch you."

"What is it?"

She shook her head at him. "It's a surprise. And you're to go right now." She stood aside for him to pass, and when he had gone down the stairs she followed, crying softly, "Don't forget that I'm going to be at the keyhole to see how you like your surprise."

He laughed back at her and ran down into the hallway. The music-room was at the far end of the house. The door was closed. He flung it open. At first he saw nothing that had not been here when she sang to him last night. The shades were low drawn, it was misty twilight in here. And then—

Then he heard a low cry of gladness and saw a woman, a young and remarkably pretty woman, coming towards him out of the shadows. He saw that there was a look of great tenderness in her deep, dusky eyes, and that an earnest joyousness trembled upon her red lips, in her smile and in her voice.

"Jasper! Oh, Jasper—thank God! Thank God!"

And then he saw the flash of her white arms as a loose wrap dropped from her shoulders and to the floor, and felt them about his neck.

"I—I," he stammered, knowing full well that he was growing violently red, knowing that a very mirthful young lady was keeping her word and was "peeking" in at them from the door behind him. "There—

there's a mistake, you know. I—" She was half laughing, half crying.

"You dear old Jasper." The words floated up to him from her lips hidden against his breast. "Of course there was a mistake. And I would have come right away when you were in trouble, but I was up at our camp in the Sierra Nevada, and didn't hear a thing of it until it was all over. And, Jasper," in a faint whisper, her eyes shining up into his, her cheeks flushed although not by any means as flushed as were John Rand's, "aren't you going to—"

"To what?" he demanded awkwardly, catching her hands and drawing them away from his shoulders.

"Kiss me?" She dropped her head quickly, as though ashamed of her boldness. And then when he stood still, merely letting her hands fall from his slowly relaxing fingers, she exclaimed, half-playfully, half-reproachfully, "Don't you love me any more? What is the matter, Jasper?"

He heard a suppressed, gurgling giggle from the hallway behind him, and for an instant thought blindly and madly of turning and rushing from the room to take Miss Audrey by her shoulders and shake her. And he realized dimly that he couldn't do such a thing, and that although he couldn't assure the lady before him that he loved her, still he could not turn his back upon her and run.

"What is it, Jasper?" she was asking again, a vague trouble in her eyes, her soft voice trembling a little. "I thought—I thought that you would be glad to see me, and I—I—have I made a mistake, Jasper?"

"That's it, that's it," he said hurriedly, moving back a step. "There are mistakes all round, aren't there?" He tried to laugh easily, and his attempt reminded him of the efforts of a young rooster trying to crow

with a new-born voice. "Won't you sit down, Miss—Miss— You see, I—I didn't expect you, and I was just—just very busy and—er—ah, I'm not feeling just right, and—"

"Jasper!" He could see that he had alarmed her, could catch a new note of positive fear in her voice. "You are not well!"

"No. I'm not well. That is, I'm not exactly sick, you know. Just a little out of sorts." And then, as she came towards him again, her eyes full of tender sympathy, feeling that he must say something, that he must stop her before he allowed her to make love to him again, "That's a very pretty hat you have on!"

"Hat!" She stopped short, regarding him with deeply puzzled eyes. "Why do you talk about a thing like that now? Why are you—this way?"

"You see, I—" And he stopped, What could he say? He saw in her eyes that the one thing in the world that she wanted was for him to put his two arms about her and kiss her. It might have been no unpleasant task ten days ago, but now—and again he could hear Audrey in the hall smother a giggle under her handkerchief. "What time is it?" He fumbled with his watch, dragged it out, stared at it without seeing the hands and cried, "Why, it's three o'clock! And I've an engagement, a very important engagement, at three! You'll excuse me, I know you will, if I hurry away? I'll send Audrey in . . ."

"Jasper." Her tone reminded him of the tinkle of ice in a glass. He stopped at the door and half turned. "I am sorry I made such a mistake. They told me of your interest in that Chatterton girl . . . and I was a little fool and believed you instead. It's all right, Jasper. I am not going to cry." Her voice was already choking, the ice all melted out of it.

"It is evident that they told me the truth and that—that you are tired of me. It is just as well to be frank, is it not?" The tortured little smile made him wince. "Only," the thaw freezing over again, "remember that I forgave you once before, and that I am not an old glove to be put on and off!" Her wrap was on again, and she had passed through the door beside him, drawing away from him so that her skirts should not touch him. "And remember that there will be no use coming to me again when you are tired of your Chatterton girl."

She went down the hallway and out at the front door. The door did not slam behind her. She closed it slowly, quietly, firmly.

"Which means that she is awful mad," cried Miss Audrey, delightedly. "My, won't Jasper have a lovely time trying to explain!"

"You little Imp!" He made her face him, and took her by the two shoulders as he might have taken a very, very little girl. "I've a mind to . . ."

"Mr. Clydsdale to see Mr. Ruud," announced a servant.

"Tell Mr. Clydsdale to go to the—"

"Sh!" commanded Audrey, wriggling out of his grasp and escaping up the stairway. "And you really must see him, John Rand, dear. It's very important business."

"Who's he?" he demanded. "I don't want to see anybody but you and—"

"But you must! And may I listen again? It's so much fun!"

He strode away to the little reception room. A pale young man, very conscious of his first young mustache, was walking up and down nervously and turned quickly as Rand came in.

"Hello, Jas, old boy." He put out a boneless hand and made a wry face as Rand crushed it in his. "I

thought I'd drop in, you know."

"So I see," retorted Rand with no great attempt at graciousness. "What can I do for you?"

"I say. You're mighty business-like to-day, Jas."

"Yes, I'm busy. Some very unpleasant but none the less important business to transact," lifting his voice for the benefit of Miss Audrey, whom he had seen tip-toe down the stairs after him. "What is it?"

Clydsdale brushed the silky growth upon his lip with caressing fingers and admired the flower in his button-hole before he found courage to answer.

"It's what I spoke to you about before, you know." His manner was insinuating, his tone confidential. "About—ah—Miss Audrey. You know, Jas, old fellow—"

"Well," snapped Rand. "What about her?"

"I—you know I love her to distraction, Jas. You know I want to marry her—"

"Marry her?" shouted Rand. "What the devil are you talking about? I'm going to marry her myself!"

Clydsdale's mouth sagged open, his small eyes opened until they were no longer small.

"Marry her!" he stuttered. "You! What do you mean?"

"Mean?" shouted John Rand. "I mean what I—" Then he remembered that he was supposed to be Jasper Ruud, and he ended weakly, "I mean I'm going to marry her to somebody I've picked out for her, of course!"

"But, old fellow, I—I thought that—that I—that you thought—"

"Well, I've changed my mind. Audrey isn't going to marry you now or later. I've got somebody else for her. That's all. Good day, Clydsdale."

Clydsdale did not close the door



slowly nor yet quietly. And as John Rand turned toward the staircase he caught a glimpse of a pair of trim ankles flitting ahead and heard the merry gurgle of Audrey's laughter.

## VII

AND now, if there were somewhere a grain of human comedy in the thing, John Rand didn't see it. He sat in Jasper Ruud's private room again, again he stared moodily out of the open window at the Styx of a river, smoked expensive cigarettes and found fault with the main-springs of the universe. It was all very well for Audrey to laugh over his meeting with the young woman in the music-room. For Audrey's optimistic young nature told her that it was simply a joke on old Cootsie, and that there would be more fun to follow when old Cootsie called on a very irate fiancée. But Rand saw further than Audrey could possibly see, saw that since Jasper Ruud would never again in this life call—

Then he heard a step behind him and swung around to see who had entered so stealthily. And then he gasped and sank back into his chair and stared as a man might stare at meeting a ghost in full noonday at Broadway and Forty-second Street.

For there before him stood Jasper Ruud! The living, breathing, actual, *real* Jasper Ruud! He knew it the instant his eyes rested upon him. He would have known it if he had never looked upon this man's face before in his life! He knew it although the man of many millions was dressed in rags and tatters, although his face had a week's growth of beard upon it, although he was haggard and worn and—hungry looking! For, as it had been when Jasper Ruud had looked into John Rand's face that night in the Yonk-

ers freight yards, so now was it as though one man were gazing into a mirror and seeing his own reflection there! And John Rand ran a nervous hand over a forehead grown suddenly damp and for the first time in his life knew what it was to feel a shiver of fear for his own sanity. For Jasper Ruud was dead! And yet—

Jasper Ruud put back a hand that was black with grime and that trembled visibly, and closed the door behind him. And then he dropped into a chair.

"I'm back," he said weakly. "I've come home."

"Thank God!" exclaimed John Rand in a devout ecstasy of thanksgiving.

"You're glad I have come back?" Ruud looked at him curiously. "You're glad?"

"Glad, man?" John Rand's voice boomed out in the mightiest, heartiest laugh that had echoed through the Ruud home for many a day. "I'm just the gladdest man you ever saw!" He took a great, deep breath of intoxicating air into his lungs and expelled it in a sigh of such relief as a man feels only when at last he has shaken from his shoulders his tenacious Old Man of the Sea. And then, "I thought that you were dead!"

"I have been." Jasper Ruud's tired, haunted eyes looked up at him from a gaunt face which, Rand realized with a shudder, might have been the face of a dead man. "And I've been in hell, too." His eyes went roving about the room and to the door of his bedroom. "There's brandy in there. But you know where. And quick! I'll die yet if you don't!"

"You won't!" Rand snapped out as he sped for the decanter. "You won't die until I'm out of this mess. Die now!" he flung back over

his shoulder. "You just try it!"

The fingers that poured the brandy were little steadier than the fingers that reached out eagerly for it. A little color came back into Jasper Ruud's pinched face as with a long, shivering sigh he gave the empty glass back to Rand.

"Ring that bell there," he said as he sank back in his chair, his fingers nervously running over his unshaven cheek. "And tell the servant I want—that is, *you* want—something to eat! Tell him anything that's cold and—"

But John Rand did not wait to listen further. It was clear to him that his one hope of happiness had come back in the form of a starving man, and he was not going to let that one hope get away from him. He rang with a persistent finger upon the button, and until the functionary loitering near the butler's pantry downstairs wondered in quickened alarm if the house were afire, and came up the steps three at a time. He met the servant in the hallway and snapped out:

"I'm hungry. Bring me some of the cold chicken, some ham, a loaf of bread, some butter and a flask of '85. And be back here with it in three minutes or you can quit!"

He went back, slammed his door and stood over what was left of Jasper Ruud, looking down at him curiously.

"You do look as though you had been through hell," he muttered musingly. "In at one end and out the other. No," as Ruud opened his mouth to speak, "I'm not taking any chances with you. You wait to do your talking until you've had something to eat. Have a cigarette."

He proffered one and lighted a match for it. And then the two men smoked in silence, each one's eyes busy with the other's features, two men measuring each other, until

there came a tapping at the door. Rand went quickly to it and took the tray from the servant.

"That will do, Bob," he told the concerned-looking fellow. "And," very gravely, "you have just saved your job by nine seconds."

"Thank you, sir," replied Bob—to the door, which shut in his wondering face.

Rand put the tray down upon a little table which he drew up to Ruud's elbow, poured out a glass of the mellow wine, and stood by the window while Jasper Ruud ate. And the river upon which he gazed was flashing with sunshine, as sparkling and beautiful a thing as some glorious stream flashing through a wonderful terrestrial paradise.

At last Jasper Ruud had eaten as much as he dared offer to an empty stomach, had sipped his wine and was smoking a cigar, looking again more like a man than a ghost.

"Now," and John Rand came away from the window and drew his chair close up to Ruud's, facing him. "Tell me about it. How does it happen that you are not dead?"

"Simply because a man dies a good deal harder than one would suppose. Because he really can go forty-eight hours at a stretch without eating and can sleep in box cars without catching his death of cold."

"But he can hardly have a locomotive run over him and tear him to pieces, and pull through!"

"So you saw that, too?" Ruud shuddered. "They were my clothes. These I have on were his. I changed with him just after I sent you to the station. And I think they were the death of the poor chap. The poor devil must have tripped in the long overcoat as he was trying to slip across the tracks in front of an engine and to get away from a railroad detective. And, Rand—you see I've got your name from the papers."

"Well?"

"I was a damned coward and a cur and I'm heartily ashamed of myself. I wouldn't have sent you into my trouble that way, only I was half crazy, I think. And then when I saw your face, and it was my face in every feature—well, temptation and fear of the electric chair were too strong and—oh, hang it all, I deserve to be kicked. You can take that as an apology if—"

"There's nothing to apologize for," Rand assured him, laughing. "I've had a great time, Ruud. And I'm actually grateful to you for it—since you didn't get yourself killed—and there's my hand on it."

"Why you are not sorry that I have come back," frowned Ruud, "gets me. Surely being in my boots—"

"Had its advantages, and its disadvantages. You'll understand later. But how did it happen that you didn't show up sooner?"

"Simply because I couldn't! In my fool frenzy when I sent you to be arrested in my place I gave you everything of value in my pockets. So that there could be no doubt of your being the man the police were after. I never thought of keeping any money, not a penny. I didn't want money, I just wanted to get away!" He drew thoughtfully at his cigar and looked long and affectionately at the familiar objects about him. "Lord, it's like a dream of heaven to be back here after the nightmare of these ten days!"

"But," insisted Rand, "you could have walked back. You must have known the next morning?"

"The next morning I was walking—way up the river! Walking as fast as I knew how. And my bad luck was running at my elbow. There was a crime committed, a hold-up and robbery and a man beaten into unconsciousness, and I

saw the whole thing! And I saw the two men run for it as a section-gang came by. And I knew that if I were found thereabouts I'd be suspected of having a hand in it. I wasn't looking for any further séances with the Law, Rand. I think in my soul I'm the most law-abiding man I ever saw, the most thoroughly chastened in spirit! I cut and ran for it. And naturally I ran plump into a railroad "bull." Naturally, because from my personal experience I know that there is one of those fellows posted every fifty yards along the line from New York to Albany! And he saw me as plainly as you see me now, and heard the shouting of murder from the section-gang, and took a pot shot at me. His gun made a noise like a fleet of warships bombarding a city. I've been running most of the time since, I think. When I wasn't hiding or peeling potatoes at somebody's back door for a meal, or chopping wood," he held up his blistered hands, "or washing dishes in a restaurant. It's only just now," he ended with a wry face, "that I got myself kicked off a river boat and sneaked in the back way. I've learned a lot, Rand. And I'm going to establish a string of free lunch counters for hoboes all the way across the continent."

Rand hadn't heard it all. He was very busy thinking about Audrey Ruud and planning out a future as bright as the river under the windows. He was recalled to the present by Ruud's voice inquiring:

"And you? What have you been doing?"

"I?" He laughed. He could laugh at anything. "Oh, I've been having a rather good time, thanks. I've spent several thousands of your surplus cash, besides the ten thousand which I gave Lon Kelton to pay him for the broken head you gave him."

"You are welcome to it and no questions asked," cried Ruud warmly. "It serves me right. And now I'm going to have a bath and get on some decent clothes, and, if you don't mind, we'll talk business."

He saw Rand looking at his right hand, and remarked bluntly:

"Yes. That was another bit of luck, damn it!" He took off the soiled bandage and held the hand up. The first and second fingers had been taken off at the first joint. "I did that just before you came up the other night, when I lied to you about having been beaten. Got it jammed between two cars. They took 'em off for me at a county hospital, a poorhouse that is an infernally poor house. Wonder I didn't die."

He had his bath, taking it luxuriously, shaved as well as he could, and came back to Rand dressed immaculately. He dropped back into his chair, selected a second cigar and smiled genially.

"I feel like a white man, again. And almost like Jasper Ruud once more. Gad, man," his eyes frowning and the smile going as they rested upon Rand. "You look more like me than I do myself!"

"Naturally. I haven't been playing hide and seek, and studying the rôle of the genus hobo! It's been my business to look like you these last few days and it's been your affair to look like somebody else."

"Well, that's over now, thank God. And we might as well come to business. I'm going to ask no questions about the money you've spent for me. I said already that you were heartily welcome to it. And you can call on me for any further reasonable sum you want."

"Thanks," drily. "And then?"

"And then, you just disappear! I'll give you enough for a year in Europe if you like. And there'll be no busybodies prying into the affair,

and no explanations to make. Get me?"

Rand thought that he did. And he thought, too, that there would, in spite of all precautions, be one rather difficult explanation forthcoming when Jasper Ruud sent in his card to the young woman who had closed the door so gently behind her.

"That's all right," was his answer. "The only thing is that I don't want to disappear just now, that I have every intention in the world of staying right here in New York!"

Ruud looked at him curiously.

"It's business that's keeping you?"

"In a way, yes. It's the business of my life!"

"But you can conduct it from abroad, by letter or by cable? If there's any loss to you I'll make it up." He went over to the writing-table and took up a check book. "How much do you want?"

"I don't want anything, thanks. I've got five thousand dollars in my pocket right now. And," with a grin, "I'm in the habit of using that same check book myself when I run out of funds."

"But don't you see that your staying here will only complicate matters, make for unpleasantness and talk? Hang it," irritably, "what has happened has happened, but I don't want people digging it up and throwing it in my face! And I'm willing to pay you anything you want just to get out of New York."

"As to complications, I'm getting rather used to them. And the one thing I want to do is to stay in New York."

"But why? When I tell you I'm ready to make it worth your while, worth any man's while. What is it, ten thousand, twenty, fifty thousand?"

"You'll understand why after a while. And a hundred thousand wouldn't take me away now. There



are some things," musingly, "that are a great deal more desirable than money."

Jasper Ruud got to his feet and strode up and down the room, puffing great clouds of smoke from his cigar. And presently he came back to Rand and stood in front of him, his eyes very determined under drawn brows.

"Mr. Rand," he said quietly, "you've got to go. Now don't misunderstand me. I know that I've acted like a cur, and a coward, and that you have a perfect right to consider me as such. But you've got to go just the same. We can't go on living this way in the same house, can we? There's Mother and Audrey and the servants; there'll be no end of a mess and no end of explanations to make. And I don't want to make those explanations. Yes, if you like, because I'm not proud of myself, and I don't fancy having people, from Audrey to the butler, laugh at me. And on the other hand you can't leave the house and stay in New York. There'll be dozens, hundreds of people seeing you in cafés, on the streets, everywhere, who will notice. And there'll be talk in two days of two Jasper Ruuds. Which will bring the whole thing up again, and—you've got to go."

"And if I won't go?" demanded John Rand, quietly.

"I—I don't like to do it—I'll make you go."

"And, may I ask, how?"

Jasper Ruud first went to the door and locked it.

"Now, listen to reason, Rand. It's impossible for you to stay. Why not tell me how much you want, why not let me pay you anything you like . . . I've got more money than I need, and I'm not stingy, and . . ."

"Out of the question," coolly. "I'm not to be bribed. You were go-

ing to tell me how you could force me to go?"

"If you won't listen to reason, yes!" He picked up the check book that he had flung back upon the table. "You have drawn heavily, you tell me? You have had to sign my name to do it? And that, Mr. Rand, is plain forgery! You force me to this. You leave New York on the first steamer bound for the other side of the Atlantic—or you stay to face a charge of forgery!"

John Rand chuckled.

"I've beat you to it, Ruud," he retorted amiably. "I've thought that all out before you. Now you listen to me for a little. I'm not going to make trouble for you unless you drive me to it. But I'm not going away just yet. Forgery, you say? There have been, all told, about a dozen checks. Each time I drove to the bank, each time I saw the cashier, each time I showed him my bandaged hand, had him write the check, and made my cross for a signature. And that cashier will identify every one of those checks and he will go on the stand and swear that he wrote them at the personal request of Jasper Ruud, that he cashed them himself, and that he handed the money to you! And what happens to your forgery charge then? There are already whispers of a bit of mental aberration and—oh, well, there is no need to go further into that. Wait a minute. I haven't finished yet. I want to make this matter clear to you.

"You would say that if called upon I couldn't form your signature . . . and I want to remind you that you couldn't do it, either! Do you realize that with two fingers gone from your right hand the signature you would make would look more like a forgery than the one I could learn to form? Wait, there's something else. Come here."

He took Jasper Ruud by the arm and drew him to the long mirror in the bedroom.

"Look. Look at the two of us. Look carefully. *Which one of us would you say was Jasper Ruud?*"

Jasper Ruud's answer was a gasp. For he saw what change the ten days had worked in his own face, realized that he had spoken more truthfully than he knew when he had said lightly, "You look more like me than I do myself!"

"And that's not all," grinned Rand, enjoying the play of Ruud's expression. "There's a young lady. She called this afternoon. I was kind to you, you know, and perhaps not kind to her. That is, she thought that I was not."

"Bella!" cried Jasper Ruud excitedly.

"And," went on Rand, smiling contentedly, "she had heard things about you and the Chatterton girl! Suppose that I went to see the Chatterton girl this evening, that I took her to the theater, that we sat in your box, that we went to Sherry's for supper, that . . ."

"You wouldn't do that!" cried Jasper Ruud excitedly, his hand gripping Rand's arm. "I'd never be able to explain, I'd never be given a chance to explain."

"Exactly. And you've got all that you will want to explain to Miss Bella now, about your reception of her this afternoon. You won't insist on my going to Europe so suddenly, will you? Now that you've had time to think about it? And that forgery charge?"

Jasper Ruud sank into a chair, put his face in his hands and groaned.

### VIII

"WELL, Rand, it looks to me very much as if you held the cards on me." Jasper Ruud helped

himself to a glass of brandy and was facing John Rand with curious eyes.

"What is it? A holdup?"

"Yes, I've got the cards. Let's see. I'm not sure that I couldn't continue to wear the shoes which you loaned me. I'm not sure that I couldn't continue to work things so that I should be Jasper Ruud until the end of time. I actually believe," with twinkling eyes, "that using the influence which I have stepped into I could have you arrested and sent up the river for beating and robbing that fellow the other day! Funny, isn't it?"

Ruud grunted. "You want something. What is it?"

"I want something. Yes, that's it. For one thing, I want to stay here, in this house, for another day or two, and as Jasper Ruud. Which means, I am afraid, that you will have to keep pretty close to this room and let me smuggle your meals up to you."

"What else?" demanded Ruud, suspiciously.

"I have called a meeting of the board of directors of the Eastern and Western Mining Corporation. It is set for five o'clock this afternoon, and the others are to come here at that time. When they come I want to continue to be Jasper Ruud."

"But, man—"

"There are no buts about it, my dear Jasper Ruud. Remember that I am in a position to ask a great deal. I am asking very little."

"Well, go on. What else?"

"I want to go to the theater to-night with a certain young lady—"

Jasper Ruud leaped to his feet.

"Bella!" he cried angrily. "You want to go with her and—"

"And put you in wrong again?" John Rand laughed. "No, not with your charming fiancée, Ruud. But—"

"With that little fool of a Chatterton girl!" snapped Ruud, suspi-

ciously. "When you know that Bella would never forgive me."

"And not with the little Chatterton girl," coolly. "I don't mind telling you that it's with the girl I'm going to marry. And further, that just as soon as she will marry me I'm ready to go to Europe or anywhere else and not bother you any more."

"So that's it. And," eying him steadily, "you're not going to ask to be paid to give me back my place?"

"No. I'm not going to ask for anything that doesn't belong to me. And I want you to see right now that if I have been forced to draw against your account it hasn't been to squander your money on myself. I have taken for personal expenses merely what was necessary for a few days of living and enjoyment."

He took a check book from his pocket and showed Ruud the stubs. There was the stub for the ten thousand paid as damages to Lon Kelton, those others for the payment of Audrey's indebtedness, a few smaller amounts for household expenses.

"And there," he tossed them to the table, "are the unendorsed checks you thrust upon me in the freight yards, and the thousand dollars in banknotes."

Jasper Ruud was too much of a business man to hesitate when he saw the one thing which he must do. And he gave in with good grace, grinning back into Rand's glowing face, and sticking his hand out suddenly.

"Shake," he said, and said it as though he meant it. "I've got this much coming to me. And I'm glad that my double happened to be a gentleman."

"You might have known it," as their hands gripped warmly. "For," with his grin broader than Jasper's, "you could see that I looked like one!"

The five men who, besides Jasper Ruud, constituted the board of directors of the mining concern, and who in reality were the Eastern and Western, came a little before five and were shown up promptly to Jasper Ruud's private office. John Rand met them at the door and ushered them in. He waved a hand toward a darkened corner of the room where a man with his back to them sat at a table.

"My new secretary," he said, by way of explanation. "Have chairs, gentlemen. There's something to smoke and a drop of mighty good brandy on the table."

These men, with scarcely a glance at the "secretary" and his papers, entered immediately into the business that had called them together. It was their business to buy mines, to develop them, to sell them. And now there was the consideration of a matter left on the table at their meeting yesterday, to be further investigated during the meantime. There had grown up suddenly in Nevada a new "boom town" about a new strike. The town was not yet a month old, and already the Eastern and Western had an option on what they had thought to be the most promising mine in the district, for fifteen thousand dollars.

"Will Carpenter and Maddox show up?" asked John Rand.

Maddox was the man who owned what he was pleased to call "The Big Lode." Carpenter the expert whom New York capitalists had sent West to investigate the property.

"Yes." It was "King" Houghton, a square-jawed, iron-gray-haired man, well known on the Street, who answered. "They'll be here in ten minutes. I told them to come shortly after five."

"Then, before they come," went on Rand, quietly, "what's the word among us? We've all had copies of

Carpenter's report. He can't add much to it by explaining matters personally. Do we buy or don't we buy?"

They all stared at him. "King" Houghton voiced their thoughts when he blurted out:

"Buy! After Carpenter's report? Did you read it?"

"I did," in the same carelessly quiet tone. "He says that it was salted heavily, doesn't he? Loaded for bear? That if there is any gold there at all it is in such scattered, insignificant quantities that it would require a thousand dollars to take out a hundred. That's about it, isn't it?"

"Which settles it for us. When Carpenter makes a report like that he knows what he is talking about."

"Yes," agreed Rand, his eyes meditatively upon his upcurling cigarette smoke. "Carpenter knows."

"The question," put in Nelson, another of the directors, "is what we are going to do to Maddox. We've paid five hundred dollars for a two weeks' option. We've gone to the trouble and expense of investigating his fake mine. It was my understanding that we were to meet to-day to vote that we call upon him to refund everything we have been out, and that if he doesn't we sue him for it. There's altogether too much of that sort of thing going on."

"I see." Rand nodded thoughtfully. "Do you gentlemen all agree with Mr. Nelson?"

They did, most emphatically.

"I think," went on Rand evenly, "that we'd be making a mistake. I, for one, vote that we close with Maddox this afternoon. That we pay him his fifteen thousand dollars and that we take over the mine. Does anyone stand with me?"

"Why?" demanded Houghton. "What do you know about that mine, Ruud?"

"I know a great deal about Maddox, that mine's present owner," Rand evaded.

"He's crooked—"

"Very, very crooked. So crooked that it makes some other men crooked to associate with him! Further, I know a man, a miner, who has been in that new town since it grew up one night last month. I wired him last night. Here is his answer."

He went to the table before which his new "secretary" was sitting, and took up a typewritten sheet of paper, handing it to Houghton. The "King" read it aloud:

*"John Rand, New York."*

Houghton stopped there. "Who's John Rand?" he wanted to know.

"My new secretary! Go on. Read it." And Houghton read:

*John Rand, New York. Big Lode belongs to Maddox. He was trying to sell a month ago for five thousand. Didn't look to me like it was worth nothing then. I just went over it like you said, and say, John, you take it from me, Maddox didn't know what he had when he would take five. It's just plain rotten with gold where they're working now. Just struck the real lode ten days ago. They're trying to keep it quiet, I guess. It's sure worth ten times what he asked for it. Your old pard,*

*Bill Huskey."*

"And," said Rand quickly, "I know Bill Huskey, too. That is," jerking his thumb over his shoulder, "John Rand here knows him well, they were partners once. You can believe what Huskey says, can't you, Rand?"

The man with his back to them didn't seem to have heard. John Rand, taking the paper from Houghton's hand, went back to the table.

"I asked you a question, Rand," he said carelessly. "I want you to assure these gentlemen that you



know from your own personal knowledge of the man that you can believe what Bill Huskey says."

Jasper Ruud started, and turned a little in his chair, pulling the green shade lower over his eyes.

"Yes," he answered. "That's right. Bill Huskey—is—ah—Bill's the right sort. You can tie to what he says."

And he dropped his head and turned back to the table.

"But," expostulated Houghton, "Bill Huskey may be an honest man and all that. But he's ignorant, his wire tells us that, and he'd be just the man to be fooled by careful salting! And Carpenter has seen the thing and assures us that it's plain bunk!"

"Nevertheless," continued Rand, coming back to them, "I vote to buy the Big Lode for fifteen thousand. Huskey says it's worth fifty thousand!"

"And Carpenter says it's worth nothing!" retorted Houghton.

Rand laughed. "Experts sometimes make mistakes. And Rand has an idea that in this case it would be well to follow Bill Huskey's advice. You have, haven't you?" swinging about toward Ruud. "You advise buying the Big Lode, don't you?"

Jasper Ruud looked up suddenly, frowned and dropped his eyes.

"I—yes!" he blurted out, having caught the look in Rand's eye. And to himself he muttered, "Here's another fifteen thousand I'm out, making good to these fellows!"

"Shall we buy?" John Rand's eyes swept their wondering faces. "Shall we buy?"

"Fifteen thousand dollars is not to be thrown away on the haphazard guess of an ignorant miner—"

"He knows what he is talking about. Shall we buy?"

No. They would not buy. And they wondered at Rand's smile.

"Then I'm going to take a flyer at it." Jasper Rudd started. "I'm going to buy it myself! No, not from Maddox, because he wouldn't sell to me and I know it. Not for fifteen thousand. But you fellows buy from him, and I'll take it off your hands—and pay over to you the five hundred the Eastern and Western is out for the option. Will you do it? Will you, Houghton?"

Houghton grumbled that it was plain damned idiocy, but shrugged his shoulders and said that he was willing to do it. And Nelson, and the rest in turn.

"Write a check for fifteen thousand, five hundred dollars," cried John Rand, flinging the check book down in front of Jasper Ruud. "Payable to the Eastern and Western. I'll sign it right now and turn it over. And write a receipt for it. Mr. Houghton will sign that. And here, I think, come Mr. Carpenter and Mr. Maddox."

Maddox, a short, thick-set man with sly, furtive eyes and a "loud" waistcoat, and Carpenter, a slender, nervous-looking young fellow, came in together. Rand nodded to them, and before speaking handed the two papers to Houghton, receiving back the receipt.

"And now," to Maddox, "what about that mine of yours? Is it salted or is it not salted?"

Maddox drew himself up pompously.

"It's worth every cent of what I've asked for it. And it's worth a damned sight more. Take it or leave it."

"How about it, Carpenter?" went on Rand smoothly. "You made a thorough investigation?"

"Yes, Mr. Ruud, I did. And I regret to say that the greater part of the gold in it has been placed there very skilfully to—catch suckers!"

"All right. Mr. Houghton, will

you tell Mr. Maddox whether or not you and the others have decided to buy?"

"We've decided," boomed Houghton, glaring wrathfully at Maddox, "that you're a damned scoundrel, and that your mine isn't worth the money we have put into the investigation of it."

"You don't have to take it—"

"No," from John Rand, genially, "they don't have to take it. But," beaming good-humoredly upon Maddox, "I have decided to take it myself. I have the papers all ready. Rand, will you hand them to Mr. Maddox to sign? Fifteen thousand dollars—"

"I won't sell it for that!" exploded Maddox. "I've had enough of the bunch of you. If the Eastern and Western has refused its option I won't sell to Jasper Ruud."

"No, Maddox," said John Rand, looking at the man steadily. "You won't sell. But, shall I tell you what you will do?"

"Well, what?" angrily.

"You'll give me just sixty-five thousand dollars to keep from selling! Don't understand? You will in a minute. I happen to need exactly fifty thousand. I am giving Houghton my check for fifteen thousand. That means that the Eastern and Western will close with you at the figure you named before you had found out that you had one of the best gold mines in the West! And the Eastern and Western already has my check for fifteen thousand, five hundred for which they immediately turn the Big Lode over to me. Do you want me to keep it? Or will you pay me an extra fifty thousand dollars to get your option back?"

"Fifty thousand!" fumed Maddox. "It's an outrage. Why, Carpenter here tells you—"

"Just exactly what you have paid him to tell us! And I think," as

Carpenter drew instinctively back from him, "that Carpenter is not going to be expert for us much longer. Now, Mr. Maddox, you can consider that to all intents and purposes I am already owner of the Big Lode. I offer it to you for just fifty thousand dollars more than it cost me. You are the man who ought to know if it's worth that. I give you exactly two minutes," jerking out his watch, "to accept. After that I pledge you my word the price goes up a thousand dollars!"

"But," yelled Maddox, his face purple with its swelling veins. "It's a damned insane—"

"Never mind what it is," coolly. "I believe that I could ask you seventy-five thousand and get it. Fifty thousand is all I want. And," with another glance at his watch, "the two minutes are going!"

For two minutes Maddox poured out a pretty steady stream of Western profanity.

"Time's up," laughed John Rand. "The price is sixty-six thousand now, Mr. Maddox. And I don't mind telling you that I've had a tip from a man named Bill Huskey—"

"Oh, hell!" grunted Maddox, disgustedly. "Give me a pen."

"Make it payable to my secretary, to John Rand," the man playing the rôle of Jasper Ruud told him good-naturedly. "I'll have him cash it for me."

"**H**OW in the world did you know?" wondered Jasper Ruud when the directors of the Eastern and Western had gone, shaking their heads, in the wake of Maddox, tearing up his old option.

John Rand looked down upon the river where the sunlight still fell warmly as he put a check into his pocket.

"I came from South America a couple of months ago, busted. I

landed in Nevada. I was one of the first men to rush into this new little mining camp. I saw the Big Lode just after Maddox had gotten possession. I knew then, what he had not guessed, that it was a real gold mine. I was still busted, flat busted. I caught the first freight out and came to New York to interest capital in that same mine. And, I guess you'll believe that I pretty nearly forgot it until the matter came up in a board meeting the other day. So I wired to Bill Huskey."

"Who's Bill Huskey, anyway?"

"Bill can't read much, and I guess it took him an hour to write that message. But, by the Lord, he knows a mine! I actually believe that if you blindfolded Bill Huskey and carried him over a gold mine he'd smell it! Anyhow," tapping the pocket into which the check had gone, "I'm almost ready for a little trip to Europe, and I pay my own way!"

"And the girl?"

"I'm going to see her about it right now!"

## IX

"**B**UT I can't go with you to the theater to-night. Honestly I can't, John Rand, dear!"

"But, Audrey, dear," he bantered, leaning across the library table and with his eyes shining into hers eloquent of many things, of one Great Thing in particular, "why can't you go to the theater with me to-night?"

"It's that horrid French grammar." Two big tears of vexation stood in her gray eyes, looking like trembling dewdrops about to fall upon the petals of a blush-pink rose. "I just hate the thing. But Mama—"

And she sighed and shook her head and laughed and dabbed at her eyes.

"We'll go driving then, instead,"

he urged. "Out for a spin in the park and—a dinner at Rector's? What do you say, Audrey? I never told you that I had studied French, did I? And on the way I can help you."

"I'd like to. But there's Mama—"

Plainly she was hesitating. He leaned just a little bit nearer and whispered:

"Just to-night, Audrey. Please. For—for I'm going away to-morrow!"

She started a little, just as he had hoped she would, and looked at him with widening, wondering eyes.

"To-morrow? Why?"

"I can't stay always, can I?"

"N-o," with what sounded to his eager ears joyously like reluctance. "But aren't you going to stay until Cootsie comes home?"

"Aren't you coming with me?" he countered. "The car is buzzing outside now—hear it? And I'll teach you your French."

So they went out together, hastily, stealthily, like two children escaping from an ogre in a fairy tale. Audrey sighed contentedly as she sank back against the soft cushions, and John Rand, the need of haste upon him, said hurriedly:

"In French, Audrey, you must begin by knowing the conjugations. And there is one verb, only one verb in all the wide, wandering world of worlds that matters. It's AMO, Audrey, and—"

"Amo," she laughed at him, "is Latin, John Rand, dear!"

"Oh, is it? Wipe that out, then, and we'll start over. In French there is only one city in the world, and that's Paris. Have you ever been there, Audrey?"

"No. But—"

"Neither have I! Isn't that a strangely remarkable coincidence? Do you see to what it points? Let's go, Audrey!"

"John Rand, dear, I'm afraid you have been drinking!"

"And so I have, God bless you! I have drunk deep, deep of the wonder of you. And in every language in the world, Audrey, I love you! I wasn't going to tell you," he laughed, "because it seems a sort of insult to your intelligence to suppose that you need telling!"

"I think," faintly, "that I'd better go back and get my French."

"Faster, Tom," he cried gleefully to the chauffeur. "When you get to the park just keep on going! Audrey, why do you interrupt me? I have so much I've got to say to you before I die and time is so short! To go back to where I intended to begin—and would have begun had you not tempted me astray with foreign languages—Jasper has come home!"

"Cootsie home?" she cried eagerly. "Where is he?"

"Upstairs in my room. It's his room now. I've given it back to him. And he's in trouble."

"More trouble? What is it now?"

"Now it's Bella. There's a steamer leaving for London to-night, and she's going. That is, she thinks she's going. She's taken tickets and all that. And she won't listen to a word Jasper tries to say. Oh, he's been trying all afternoon to explain to her over the telephone. I wouldn't let him leave the house," with a chuckle. "Now what happens if she goes?"

"She mustn't go! She wasn't going until she and Cootsie were married, and she's going now just because—because," contritely, "I played that stupid joke on you two!"

"Exactly," he nodded approvingly. "And it's just your fault if two loving young hearts are torn asunder!"

"You mustn't laugh at it. We can't let her go."

"No. I've thought it all out. I'll be at the pier when she comes down to take the steamer. I'll step out where she can see me, and will have a boy handy to carry my suit-cases on board. Then she'll turn back—and run right into the other Jasper Ruud. And we will gallop on board and take her place and—aren't you glad you've never been to Paris, Audrey, dear?"

"We?" she challenged him.

"Why, of course. For I'm not going alone. And listen to me, young lady. You've got 'em into this mess. You've got to sacrifice yourself in getting them out. And, think of it! There'll be no more French grammars! The boat doesn't leave until ten o'clock. The good Lord arranged to have it delayed. It's eight now. Two hours to telephone to Jasper Ruud to meet us at the pier, to get a minister, and to fix up the change of tickets. And listen to this. I've made some money to-day; not much for a Ruud but a whole lot for a Rand! And you get around that by ceasing to be a Ruud—and becoming a Rand!"

They sped into the park and swept through it from end to end. Tom turned and drove back through the park. Audrey and John Rand did not know whether they were in the park or at Herald Square.

"John Rand, dear," Audrey laughed happily at him—long before it was ten o'clock—"you're not going to get conceited over it, are you? For," defiantly, "it's just to help poor old Cootsie out—and for a joke on Mother and—"

She flung the French grammar out of the window.



# YUAN, FOUNDER OF A NEW DYNASTY

China's Return to the Monarchical Form of Government, and  
the Man Who Has Become the New Emperor—a  
Character Study of Yuan Shih-K'ai

By ADACHI KINNOSUKE

*[The new Chinese Empire and its politics are again in the public eye. China as a republic never seemed apposite to the Western mind, and there are few regrets based on the sentiment of democracy that it is again ruled by an Emperor. Mr. Adachi, a Japanese of high literary attainments in the English language, here sketches briefly the career and personality of "the man who would be king."—THE EDITOR.]*

"NOW if I make myself Emperor," says Yuan in accepting the crown, "I would break my oath. . . . My primary object, however, is to save the country and to save the people and I do not mind sacrificing myself for the attainment of this object." There is a simplicity about this—a child-like candor which disarms the deadliest of his enemies, a sort of golden-curbed, blue-eyed Little Lord Fauntleroy innocence, isn't there?

Now let us take the oath to which he refers:

"On the day on which the Republic was proclaimed," said Yuan, "I announced to the whole nation that never again should a monarchy be proclaimed in China. At my inauguration, I again took this solemn oath in the sight of Heaven and earth!"

Not a few American editorial pens fairly itch with cynical temptation over these statements. And when Yuan, in the same speech of acceptance, comes out with: "But the fact of requesting me to ascend to the throne is indeed astonishing," they

feel that there is a limit to human endurance. They feel utterly constrained to say:

"Oh, of course, it certainly should be astounding—to Yuan. He had worked for this very thing for two years and more. He had spent money like water for it. He had marshaled his own subsidized henchmen into a hall and put up a sign over it—'People's Convention.' He had pronounced every whim of this 'rigged-up' convention as the sovereign will of the people. He had sacrificed Sun Yatsen and other authors of the Chinese Republic for this very end. In 1914, he dissolved the last ghost of Parliament; killed all the representative and self-governing bodies throughout the Republic and put local administrations under the central government at Peking. He had worked like a modern Titan for just this goal. Therefore, it must be tremendously astonishing to see the throne offered to him by the very men whom he had paid good prices to offer it to him. However, he is accommodating, if astonished. He is perfectly willing to break his solemn

oath to save the country and please his people. He is a philanthropist!"

But this is because American editorial writers know human nature much better than political China.

And this is important to know from the start, if one were to understand the new Emperor of China.

Yuan is the sublimation of official China—a superb political humorist. Boss Tweed and his furious and fattening ring might have thought that they understood the game. They understood it as devotees of the simple life understand a Roman orgy, compared to Yuan the past master. Yuan, in fact, is the key to political China of to-day; therefore, intensely interesting. And the tracks he has made all through the fateful days of China are highly readable even to the subscribers of a fiction library. His is a highly spiced tale.

In the fruitful Province of Honan, in a modest town in Chengchau near the city of Changte, a boy was born to a well-to-do family. It was in the middle of the month of September, fifty-seven years ago. The baby looked just like any other wee one. He wasn't though. He showed that he wasn't by convincing his parents that he was an uncommonly bad boy. But he looked like millions of other bad boys. But again he wasn't. And he showed it in this way: he was enthusiastically in love with the soldier life. In America and in Japan, the boys who adorn their dreams with "Injuns" and heroes in the bloody heat of battle, are about as many as there are boys. Nothing of the sort is true in China. The wish to be a soldier is a lonely and rare distinction. "I would rather see my boy a beggar," said a prosperous Chinese to his American friend, "than to find him in a soldier's uniform." The soldier in China was on an equal footing with the outcast in the boyhood days of Yuan; and

Yuan's one dream was to get into the military uniform. He was different—there is no gainsaying that—from the start.

He endured the life, pipe-dreamy and full of peace, of his native town for years with a great show of fortitude and humility. It never occurred to him evidently, how philosophic and charitable his native townspeople were toward him and his odious actions. Most sinners are built with a pair of blinds over their eyes so far as their own sins are concerned. Anyhow, at about the dangerous age of nineteen, his home town became a little too trying for Yuan.

Circumstances favored his wander-lusting soul. For at the time, his uncle was serving as the Taotai of Tientsin. Therefore, he abandoned himself unreservedly to the siren songs of his young blood and managed to smuggle himself out of Honan and make his way somehow to his uncle in Tientsin. Here authentic historic data are lacking, but an impression persists that his uncle did not seem to show any more enthusiasm over Yuan than over any other young vagabond. Somehow, it seems unreasonably hard for good and wise people to discover a man of destiny when they see him face to face. The uncle did not keep Yuan with him long. He sent the boy to Wu Changching who was then the Governor of Shantung, with a little note which begged the Governor of Shantung to give the young man any old job—sweeping out the soldiers' barracks, for example. The bearer, said the uncle's note, is fond of soldier life.

Wu, the Governor, did not make Yuan clean out his soldiers' quarters. Wu had served with Yuan's uncle; moreover, he took a liking to the young man. He took him into the bosom of his family, gave him an

equal opportunity with his own children. In that manner he came under the influence of the famous scholar, Chang Chien, who was then the private tutor to Wu's children, and whose fame was already abroad in the land. Later when Yuan became the Premier and organized his first cabinet, Chang Chien accepted the Presidency of the Board of Agriculture and Commerce. Yuan evidently was happier with Governor Wu. When Li Hungchang sent Wu to Korea as Resident Minister, we find our young friend Yuan blossoming forth in the uniform of a petty military officer in the minister's suite. Just then, Korea was not sleeping much; things were happening as if the royal palace at Seoul were staging a moving-picture show every minute of day and night. And old lady Intrigue was pulling her wires everywhere over everything and everybody. That was like "Home Sweet Home" to Yuan, that sinister atmosphere of the Korean court of the early nineties. He waxed there like a bamboo sprout after a spring shower. He showed a positive genius in hatching up plots that were dark; he was also almost uncanny in sensing out counter-plots. Some of his achievements more than impressed his chief, the Chinese Resident Minister, Wu; they amazed him. But the point was that the minister's eyes were not the only pair which were watching the young man. Ma Liang marked Yuan closely. And Ma was one of the able lieutenants of Li Hungchang. And it was the famous Viceroy Li who, a little later, swung the obstinate purple portals of fame wide for young Yuan. The Viceroy thought so much of the young man that he spoke of him to Prince Kung.

And the name of Yuan was heard in the palace of the Forbidden City.

Not only according to his own

light, but also in the shrewd, old, wily eyes of Viceroy Li, Yuan served his country well in Korea. All the nauseating tragedy of the Korean court, in the cesspool of corruption to its very neck, was a regular theater party to him. He seemed to be about the only actor of the whole miserable show who was throwing flowers at himself and to his unbounded joy. More than one historian has accused him of luring the Korean patriot, Kin Yokkin, to Shanghai and murdering him in a manner foul and bloody enough to be perfectly orthodox in the annals of a Hottentot carnival. And when he succeeded in kidnapping that ancient fox, Taiwunkun, the father of the then reigning Korean king, and held him a helpless prisoner in Tientsin, even he thought that he added a feather to his cap. He was right, decidedly. He was a very clever young diplomatist. And it was his over-cleverness rather than anything else that led to the China-Japan War of 1894-5.

The China-Japan War gave Yuan a black eye in the estimation of his chief, Li Hungchang. Viceroy Li dropped him without ceremony.

But the stars worked for this "blue-cloud-climbing child" of ambition, as the Chinese would say. And they worked for him in the person of Sheng Hsuanhuai. Sheng was the brain of Li's camp. It was he who, later, in 1911, as minister of Posts and Communications negotiated the famous "Four-Power" loan; he was the author of the nationalization of railways and stood out like a giant pillar of the last cabinet of the Regent, Prince Chun. He was sacrificed on the altar of Szechuan discontent. This man talked to his chief, Viceroy Li, about Yuan until reconciliation was brought about between the veteran chief and his aspiring young lieutenant.

And Fate much more than Li Hungchang placed into the hand of Yuan the work of building the new army of China. He took over from Hu Yunmei some 5,000 more or less—mostly less—trained men who answered to the large name of the Army of the North. Yuan with the efficient help of a German drill-master called Schaller and a Norwegian called Munthe increased the force to 12,500.

About this time, he came into a knowledge which was more precious than fine gold and much more to be desired than the gems of the sea. It was not a profound one, but of infinite practical value to him: That the "foreign barbarians" had their uses. That was it. At Tientsin he came in touch with a large number of foreigners; he was not slow to see what they could do. It has been a fashion to speak of him as an apt pupil of Li Hungchang. A simple historical fact is that he was much greater than his master. For one thing, he had an almost infallible gift—an instinctive gift of picking out "the right horse to bet on." As for tenderness or sentiment of any sort, and gentleness of method in brushing aside any impediment standing between him and his goal, the coldest steel in creation would be a sniffing Sister of Charity beside him.

Perhaps it was the lessons of the China-Japan War; perhaps it was more due to his association with foreign men and institutions, which made a progressive out of Yuan. He joined the camp of the reformers, then under the leadership of the famous Kang Yuwei.

Kang enjoyed the full and whole-souled confidence of the young Emperor Kuanghsu, whose tutor he was. Kang was, had been, and is to this day, a scholar and a dreamer of splendid dreams. He was no politi-

cian. He could not read Yuan in a thousand years. Neither could the young Emperor, who was a slender and frail prophet whose enthusiasm for the birth of New China consumed his entire soul. And these two guileless men put their unquestioning trust into perhaps the most astute, cold-blooded politician China has ever produced.

The charming dream of the New China was smashed in the autumn of 1898. The reform edicts of the young Emperor had thrown a lot of hoary grafters out of their soft corners. They marched in a body and threw themselves at the feet of the good-natured (and she was really very good natured, too) Empress Dowager, who was then taking her dearly earned ease at Iho Park. They squealed their pitiful prayers at her like so many panic-stricken pigs that they were and begged Her Imperial Majesty to return to power and save the country from "that boy"!

When the young Emperor heard this, he summoned Yuan from Tientsin post haste. To show how much confidence His Majesty placed in Yuan, he gave the commander of the Army of the North a personal and private audience. It was an unheard-of honor. It never occurred to the young Emperor, evidently, to question the loyalty of Yuan. The Emperor told him everything; asked him to go back to Tientsin, dispose of the nominal commander-in-chief, Junglu, who was a great favorite of the Empress Dowager and lead his 12,500 men to Peking and hold the Empress Dowager a virtual prisoner at Iho Park while the young Emperor put through his reform program.

Yuan received the Imperial order without a wink of protest, let alone a word of dissent. Then he went straight to Junglu, the old Dowager



Empress' favorite and told him everything. He showed Junglu the Imperial order in vermilion. Perhaps he knew better than another that Junglu would not have believed him without some such impeccable proof. The young Emperor waited for Yuan and his army in vain.

What took place is a matter of history which school children are reading to-day in their textbooks.

There are historians who get red in the face over this betrayal—this blasphemy of perhaps the most sacred thing between man and man—over this murder of the New China, over the revolting massacre of a really great dream. But the fact was, Yuan simply bet on the right horse. That was all. What's the use of working one's self into a rage because a circus lion doesn't burst into patriotic tears over the Battle Hymn of the Republic?

At any rate—true to Yuan's shrewd arithmetic, this betrayal of his august master's confidence paid Yuan well. The Empress Dowager rewarded him with the junior vice-presidency of the Board of Works in 1899 and promoted him to the Governorship of Shantung in 1900. And that, as you recall, was the year made famous the world over with the uprising of the so-called "Boxers."

Yuan—so the story runs—invited a number of "Boxer" leaders to dinner one day in the early stage of the uprising. He listened to their "conch-shell blowing" patiently. When they bragged of their magic power which protected them against the rifle bullets of "foreign barbarians," Yuan took them at their word. He asked his guests, already deep in their cups, to step out to the back garden and show him. He had plenty of rifles and bullets—he told them. The tipsy revelers posted themselves against the garden wall.

Yuan ordered his soldiers to fire at them point blank. It was murder. Also it was clever. Our gentle readers must not take this as a model post-prandial courtesy of the Twentieth Century Orient. Yuan was against the "Boxers" all the way through. He protected foreigners and their property against them. He went the length of ignoring Imperial edicts against the foreigner. All this, of course, took nerve, a stout heart. It has been said that not a single foreigner lost his life in Shantung while Yuan was the governor. Thenceforth, foreigners could not see anything else on the Chinese landscape but Yuan. That was the biggest advertising hit Yuan had ever made. It was dramatic in the extreme and quite as effective as sensational.

Once again Yuan bet on the right horse.

With the death of the famous Li Hungchang, Yuan was appointed, in 1901, Viceroy to the metropolitan Province of Chihli. There was a fine chance of driving home the advantage which he had gained through the "Boxer" days in commanding the confidence of the European and American residents in China. He grasped it with both hands. He secured the services of Professor C. D. Tenny, an American diplomatist, in establishing the public school system in Tientsin. He improved the streets of Tientsin after the European model; he endeared himself to the military element among foreigners through his liberal attitude to General J. M. N. Munthe, his Norwegian drill master.

At the beginning of the year 1906 there was nothing between him and his "blue cloud," but smiling, serene sunshine. He was the Viceroy of Chihli; head of the Peiyang Army and Navy Administrations; Associate High Commissioner of the Army

Reorganization Council; Vice-Commissioner of the Peking Banner Corps Reorganization Bureau; Associate Director of the Tientsin-Chin-kiang Railway; and the Associate Commissioner of Tariff Revision. He was the possessor of the yellow Riding Jacket, which he had received in 1902. In 1907 he was honored with the three-eyed peacock's feather. It was in 1908 that the long career of the old Empress Dowager Tse-hsi came to the close. Yuan saw that if the Emperor Kuanghsu survived the Empress Dowager, it might not be very healthy for a certain "blue-cloud-climbing" official of China rather dear to him. Therefore—at least so runs the rumor—Yuan made the liberal gift of 33,000 taels to the palace physician attending the frail Emperor. A number of people who ought to know seem rather inclined to believe this rumor. Miss Kang Tung-pih, a Barnard graduate and the accomplished daughter of Kang Yuwei, the reformer tutor of Emperor Kuanghsu, openly charged Yuan with the murder of the Emperor, saying: "It was as well known in the court of Peking as it was known to my father that Yuan caused the Emperor to be murdered."

Kuanghsu had said—poor Emperor, so child-like in his impotent rage—that the death of the Empress Dowager would bring the day of reckoning for those traitors who had betrayed him. Nobody but one with the guileless soul of a child would have whispered such a thing in that plague pen of intrigue in the Forbidden City whose every wall had a thousand ears. And Yuan's ears must have been among the first to hear it. Was Yuan guilty? The dead must rise to answer the question. If he were, it was murder in self-defense. And most certainly, it was an act of infinite mercy—on the

part of Yuan. For the life to which Yuan had condemned the young "Son of Heaven" by his betrayal of 1898 was a living death compared to which the nine cycles of Hades were but a summer picnic.

As late as the latter half of 1913, Chan Kwing-ming, whom Yuan, as the Provisional President of the new Republic, had appointed to the Governor-Generalship of Kwang-tung, accused Yuan of "ordering Generals Chang Chunwu and Feng Wei to be shot dead on the strength of only one telegram from Wuchang" without a legal trial. Chan also charged Yuan with directing Wu Sze-ying to murder Sung Chiaoyen, and after that was done, had the murderer murdered—so that there might be no living lips to bear witness about the crime. These are black enough charges, but the ex-Governor General of Kwangtung does not rest there. He charged Yuan also with poisoning Lin Shuhing and Shum Lingkwan at Peking.

When the baby Emperor, Puyi ascended the throne and his father, Prince Chun, the Regent, gave Yuan a little vacation to nurse his rheumatic leg, it looked, for a time, as though, for once, Yuan's unfailing instinctive genius of picking the winner played him a shabby trick. It wasn't though. It was simply setting a magnificent stage so that this matchless political juggler could display his talent in many-colored spotlights. For just then Republican Revolutionists rose all along the Yangtse.

It wasn't very long before the panic-stricken Manchu Court sent command after command summoning him to Peking. Yuan fished in his native town in Honan and played the shy "prunes-and-prisms" early Victorian heroine of Jane Austen's novels to perfection to all the urgent entreaties of the Peking Court. In

the ripeness of time, however, he went up to the Forbidden City. He aired his stage rhetoric. He was a martyr to be sacrificed. He knew it, he said. But the court of his Imperial Master and the Manchu throne had to be saved at any cost to his personal safety. And before the eyes of the whole world, he played the heroic rôle of the latter-day Joshua—commanding the sun of the Ta Ching Dynasty to stand still upon the Far Eastern Gibeon. Yuan gave the audience its money's worth; he has always been an excellent stage manager. His histrionic triumph was remarkable. But it was nothing compared to another thing he did.

For even as he was playing the rôle of the faithful defender of Manchu absolutism, this miracle-worker bewitched the Republican revolutionists of Young China into beholding in him, Yuan the Great, the one and the only hope of the Republican China which was being born.

To be sure he performed this miracle through his influence over the only modern army of China and the command of imported guns and through the confidence he commanded among his foreign friends. But whichever way you look at it, it was a remarkably shrewd performance. Evidently he was not sure which side was going to win—the Republican or the Manchu. So he bet on both sides at one and the same time. He must have said to himself: "If this revolution is to go the way of so many other revolutions, and fizzle out in the side streets of Canton and Shanghai, why then I can turn to the Manchu Court and say, 'Behold your savior.' If, on the other hand, the Republicans win, then I can face them and tell them that I have the Manchu tyrants in the hollow of my hand and can dictate my will and the will of Republican China to them. With the army

I control I can make them do my pleasure and yours. Just give me a vermilion sign."

And that was precisely what he did and what did happen.

With equal skill he turned Sun Yatsen into a big bombastic purveyor of rhetoric the moment the Republic took shape. And Yuan annexed its Presidency. That was October, 1913.

The year 1914 shows Yuan at the top of his form. It began with the second session of the Administrative Conference; it closed with—I should have said, crowned itself with—Yuan's visit to the Temple of Heaven and the symbolic and imperial ceremonies of the winter solstice.

The Administrative Conference was called together to remedy the defects of the Provisional Constitution of March, 1912. This doctor made a clean job of it by murdering the patient. The Conference dissolved what little was left of the so-called Parliament. It disbanded all the self-governing bodies throughout the Republic. It placed the local administration under Tutuhs (who, a little later in the year, gave way to military officers called Chiangchün who were under the control of the central government at Peking, under the Ministry of War). A new Committee created by the Conference took its place in March and about the first thing it did was to declare void Article 41 of the Provisional Constitution. That article provided for the impeachment of the President. The committee gave unrestricted power to Yuan over the national treasury; placed into his hands the control of army and navy and the other administrative powers and made him responsible only to the citizens of the Republic.

Who was pulling the wire? It may be a pertinent question but looks exceedingly silly.

And Yuan being an artist in his way crowned all this murder of constitutional institutions in the so-called Chinese Republic with a masterpiece. He went to the Temple of Heaven and trod the path to the snow-white altar shining like a huge, transfigured pearl among the pines. No mortal feet had ever trod that path save those of a "Son of Heaven." Therefore it was a pretty definite message that Yuan gave to the world at the close of 1914.

And to-day, one whole year later, there are people who seem to be surprised to hear that Yuan is an Emperor and the Republic of China is with the ghosts of all the splendid dreams of earth.

There is no argument at all about it. Yuan is a man of genius, a perfect wonder. It is not without reason that so many people in the Far East got into the habit of saying to all the world, themselves included, that Yuan was the only iron-armed man who could govern China. And no doubt there is more truth than poetry in it.

The transfiguration of the President of the brand new Republic of China into a despotic monarch as old as the ghost of Shih Hwang Ti in a couple of years (since October, 1913) is a veritable Arabian Nights' Entertainment of latter-day politics. It makes one's head swim. But that is largely because one does not know Yuan in the first place and in the second place, he doesn't stop and think things over a bit.

This, for example: Perhaps, after all, there never was such a thing as Republican China. I mean an Oriental republic, 3,913,560 square miles big—which is the official size of China—containing some 320,650,000 republicans. Of course, we all know that there was a small clique of thinkers, dreamers and kickers, a few hundred thousand in number,

along the Yangtse, in Canton and in Peking. But no arithmetic book in the world would put an equal sign between a few hundred thousands and one third of a billion; and it does not seem to be a mathematically righteous thing to do to put down the progressive programs of a few hundred thousands as the desire of the entire Chinese people. There is, there can be but one conclusion from all this: There never was such a person as the President who assumed the high office of their chief magistrate by the wish of the people of China—by the wish of the majority of over three hundred million souls in China. He is the figment of a fairy fiction. Are you inclined to doubt this, gentle reader? Just stop long enough to tell yourself this simple fact, long enough so that you can really hear it, so you can really understand it:

"There might be as many as one million Chinese, born, bred, and living there to-day who could tell a republic from a monarchy when they bump their heads pretty hard against it. But that is doubtful. There may be as many as ten millions of Chinese who have never heard the name of Yuan Shih-K'ai in all their born days. But to admit that takes a lot of politeness. And think, gentle reader, think, the Chinese are a nation of over three hundred millions of people! At least 99 per cent. of the perfectly good Chinese who pay taxes one way or another don't know what they are paying them for. Some of them seem to have a pretty clear idea as to where their money is going, of course, but almost 100 per cent. of them don't seem to care a dried persimmon about it."

Of course, the number of thinking and newspaper-reading Chinese is constantly increasing—increasing even at an amazing rate. And before most of us realize it, the real New



China may stare us in the face. And what is true to-day may not be true in even a short year or two. There is no telling. But to-day—

Honestly, there seem to be more people in the United States and in Japan who are worried about the passing of the plain citizen Yuan into the new-fangled founder of a new

dynasty than in the whole of moss-bound China. Why should people worry over a couple of words anyhow: Republic and Monarchy? Especially when our Chinese brethren by the millions don't know the difference between the two words—and what's more, care much less?

### COLONEL HOUSE—THE MAN WHO SURE CAN RIDE A HOSS

SOME Texas Democrats were extremely anxious to secure certain political appointments and selected one of their number to go on to Washington and put through the deal.

"Sam," said the leader to the delegate, giving him his final instructions, "if you can't possibly get to see Colonel House, why then I suppose you'll have to be satisfied with seeing the President!"

This is only a Texan form of humor, but it pretty well illustrates the relationship between President Wilson and his closest friend, Col. E. M. House, of Austin, Texas. Colonel House (no satisfactory explanation of the title has ever been made) met President Wilson for the first time less than a year before his election. Since then everyone—and especially every old Democratic standard bearer—has wondered and guessed and become amazed at the swift progress of that friendship. It was Colonel House who went into Mexico for the President, and also went to many other places, including the belligerent countries of Europe.

The Colonel doesn't do this for emolument, he possesses several millions and is an honest farmer—he says so himself, and has a thousand-acre farm to back it up. When not hobnobbing with the President or visiting his two daughters in New York City, he is down on his farm.

His superintendent covers the farm in a big touring car, but the Colonel is never happy in that car. He prefers to straddle a decidedly lively mustang and gallop the length and breadth of his broad acres. Sometimes he gets his guests to accompany him on horses, but only once—he sets too swift a pace for them. After the first time they take to the automobiles.

"What do you know about Colonel House?" a newspaper man, sent out to get the "inside story" of the Colonel, asked his farm superintendent.

"He sure can ride a hoss," was the reply.

"Is that all?" teased the newspaper man.

"All? Why, sonny, that's enough for any Texan," and the seeker for information got no more there.

# BELLOWS ROUTS THE DEMON RUM

*T. Tetherington Bellows, Latter-Day Robin Hood, Goes in for Social Uplift and Makes His Mark as a Temperance Exhorter. And Noah Webster Justifies Him*

By EDWARD LYELL FOX

**B**EFORE his luncheon T. Tetherington Bellows always took a cocktail—"A little arrack, juice of a lime, frappé well." Never getting up until about noon, he liked to face the day with a smile. He generally bought his cocktail about two hours before he bought the flower for his buttonhole,—different flowers, carefully chosen for different days. If this were Wednesday—as he sat down to order his luncheon in the Clarendon he contemplated the kind of flower he would buy. Wednesday! Hm! Something light—always a frivolous flower on Wednesdays. The selection was the most troublesome thought he had.

The movie actress smiled sweetly across the dining-room. Sighing something to herself about his being "grand," she ventured he must come from Wall Street. Bellows looked at her with a gaze as innocent as a child's; or perhaps he was bored. This was Tuesday. It was only on frivolous days that he took girls to tea. She thought him dangerously good-looking—maybe he was old; maybe he was young. Smooth-shaven, hair sleeked by the barber, boots without a speck, clothes immaculately creased, T. Tetherington Bellows looked what he was not, a *matinée* idol. Indeed, his occupation puzzled many. The telephone girl at the Clarendon came the closest to it.

"Wise money," she had once briefly said; although Bellows was generally careful over the telephone. The hotel management liked him because he always paid his bill. Besides, he radiated a sunshine and good cheer that the nervous clerks behind the desk were unable to give to the Clarendon hotel. Not a servant in the house would have stolen a thing from his room; he understood the really fine art of tipping.

Engrossed in his luncheon, he forgot the movie actress, who did not forget him, and tried to take his usual enjoyment out of the food. He had ordered carefully. Despite the war, he was still bold enough to order caviar. This, with an *Oeuf Mornay*, satisfied him. He called for coffee and a liqueur, a *Grande Marnière*. But even the clear blue smoke of an excellent Havana failed to satisfy him. From time to time he twisted uneasily in the chair. He admitted he was restless. He longed to get into the game. For weeks now, he thought, he had done nothing and it was beginning to bore him.

A man dropped into the seat beside him. Bellows looked up in surprise. All the other tables in the dining-room were empty.

"Taste not, handle not!"

Calmly the stranger had taken Bellows' liqueur glass and poured the contents on the floor.

"What the deuce!"

The stranger held up a warning finger.

"Sh—h. The moment I saw you, I knew I must save you."

"Do I look as if I needed to be saved?" grinned Bellows.

Wondering what kind of a crank he was up against, Bellows studied the man. Dressed entirely in black, with a face more solemn even than his clothes, the stranger had an air of painful, absurd seriousness.

"Young man," he continued severely, "look not upon the wine when it is red."

"Ah, fine!" thought Bellows. "A nut."

"You are giving yourself to the devil." The stranger's voice rose a little. "You are making the liquor dealers rich."

"Poor devils," thought Bellows, "they'd starve if they had to depend on me."

"You are ruining your home. You are making yourself a disgrace to the community."

That jarred Bellows a little. He prided himself upon being an ornament to any community. Flossie at the bookstand had told him so,—at least she had asked if he considered himself one. Not an ornament, eh? With a snap of his fingers, Bellows called a waiter. "A little *Grande Marnière*,—no, two. One for my friend here."

The man's eyes became almost fanatical. It seemed to Bellows that his nerves were worn almost to the breaking-point. The corners of his mouth were drawn down in a strained expression and the pallor of his face, contrasting pitifully with Bellows' sunny, ruddy countenance, seemed accentuated. Bellows recognized his tones as those of the professional exhorter, be he propaganda lecturer or walking delegate.

"Spend not your substance on riot-

ous living. Strong drink is raging."

Bellows yawned.

"Now, you see," and he turned to the stranger, "you're offering to save me. You'll have to drink one of these liqueurs now that I've ordered them. Think of what might happen if I drank them both myself. Now I can't throw one away. When I was a boy, I once heard the minister say that it was a sin to waste," and Bellows spread out his hands blandly.

All of a tremble, muttering to himself, the stranger made a gesture of despair and left. And as impulsively, Bellows' mood changed. "Poor devil," he murmured.

"Who is that fellow?" Bellows asked a waiter.

"His name is Sneggs, a temperance lecturer. The hotel has been trying to get him out. He's hurting business. All the wine agents are kicking."

"Fine!" smiled Bellows. "Why doesn't the hotel begin an exchange of diplomatic notes with him?"

And in peace now, Bellows sat down to read the earlier editions of the afternoon papers. The Bellowses of this world act on impulse. You have seen them strolling around the Waldorfs of our leading cities. Even their dress is impulsive, always well tailored, but running to checks and plaids. A generation ago they used to wear diamond horseshoes in their ties. They only work when their money gives out, or when they feel the call. Like the Socialists, their doctrine is to take riches from those who possess riches. Some of their kind are sinister, others are not. If you asked Bellows for money, you were never refused. In his up and down career he had helped more men than he had harmed. And never had he harmed the poor. In this way he differed from those whose vocation is high finance.

From his way of acting on im-

pulse, Bellows was often affected, rather inspired, by things he read in the newspapers. Like many of our best writers, he culled his ideas from them. And now chance, elusive chance, always his destiny, beckoned to him from the pages of print. He read of Billy Sunday making \$75,000 out of saving souls. He read that business was so good with that other peerless soul-saver, William Jennings Bryan, that he left Washington at a critical time in the nation's diplomacy. And there came back to Bellows a picture of the somber man seated opposite to him at the table, the gloomy, ranting Sneggs.

"Poor chump," thought Bellows. "He didn't play the game right."

Straightaway Bellows called for his check. All at once there had come over him an air of alertness. His eyes, no longer indolent, merrily gleamed with anticipation. He was *Ariel* suddenly set free. Five minutes later he was shown into the room of Mr. Sneggs, Temperance Lecturer. With a cold frown, the withered little man had turned from the writing-table, no word of welcome on his lips.

"Ah, Mr. Sneggs," smiled Bellows. "My dear man, I have been thinking over what you told me. Your words struck deep."

And Bellows pulled out a baby blue silk handkerchief that matched his tie and touched his eyes.

"You have brought back memories to me. I have a big heart, Mr. Sneggs, and you have hurt it. What a wonderful work you do! What a noble life! I've come to thank you. From now on the demon rum and I are enemies."

Mr. Sneggs smiled as warmly as his nature would allow. "It is a pleasure, brother, to have you in the fold. Won't you sit down?"

Ring the bell, Mr. Sneggs went

so far as to order a pitcher of ice-water.

"But, my dear Mr. Sneggs," continued Bellows, "you are doing yourself a wrong. With your noble work you are ruining your health. You should take a rest. You owe this to our nation. It needs you so much."

Mr. Sneggs smiled in appreciation. "But, my dear sir," he replied, "that is all very easy to suggest, but when one cannot afford—" and Mr. Sneggs held out empty hands.

"As President, General Manager, and Treasurer of the Human Welfare Society," exclaimed Bellows, drawing out his wallet, "allow me!" And he peeled off two one hundred-dollar bills. "This is not charity, my dear Mr. Sneggs. Our institution is devoted to assisting those who are doing work for their country. Won't you go somewhere and take a rest—later to return and do your work better?"

"It is too much," said Mr. Sneggs, as he put the money in his pocket.

"You must," said Bellows. "Let me recommend a nice farm out in Orange County." He picked up the telephone and ordered: "Clerk, buy a ticket on the afternoon train for Cedarmount! And now," he added, putting down the 'phone, "you see, my dear Mr. Sneggs, it is all finished."

The little man appeared panic-stricken.

"I forgot," he said, "I should continue my temperance lectures in a week. I should open at Holyboro, Vt., on the 21st of the month."

"Postpone it," said Bellows. "Don't worry about it. I'll send them a telegram."

"You are so kind," murmured Mr. Sneggs.

"Not at all," grinned Bellows. "I'll have a taxi here half an hour before train time. I'll see you off."

Several hours later Bellows was



saying good-bye to the greatly excited Mr. Sneggs, who was like a child being let out to play. As the train pulled out he even waved his hand to Bellows.

"Don't forget to send the telegram to Holyboro," were Sneggs' last words.

Bellows did not forget. He went right back to the hotel. He stopped at the desk and called, "I'm leaving to-night. Have my baggage packed. Get me a ticket for Holyboro. Where?—Vermont, you boob!"

Serenely T. Tetherington strolled through the lobby.

"And how is Gaby Deslys to-night?" he called to the girl behind the bookstand.

"Fresh!" she snapped, but smiled. Then with adoring eyes she watched his wide, perfectly-tailored back disappearing into the grill room.

"T. Tetherington, my boy, you're going on a long drought," he commiserated himself. "Waiter! A flock of Pilsner beer!"

AT 4:23 in the afternoon each day, Holyboro woke up. That was when the train came in. As soon as the brakeman yelled "All aboard!" and the shriek of the locomotive's whistle died away down the valley, Holyboro went to sleep again. But that was before the new guest at the Mansion House came to town.

For fifteen hours now, the little Vermont town had been awake. The afternoon before it had been startled by seeing a large, smiling gentleman—they knew he was a gentleman because he seemed to have plenty of money—climb down from the dirty accommodation train and superintend the unloading of his baggage. The interest of Holyboro was divided between the man and his baggage. Of the latter, there were ten pieces, ranging from a large wardrobe trunk to a pair of hat boxes.

Now, at ten o'clock the following morning, the natives were still gathered in front of the two-story building called the Mansion House, waiting for the stranger to appear. Why had he come to Holyboro?

"He's being shaved now," a barefooted, freckle-faced urchin ran up to the group with the information.

"He's being shaved . . . He's being shaved." The word was passed down the line.

Hicks, the negro man-of-all-work, shuffled out of the hotel with an even more valuable piece of information. In a whisper he confided it to Sam Fischer:

"He tipped the men who brought up his baggage five dollars apiece. He paid six dollars a day for a room that old Works would always take seventy-five cents a night for."

All this did not fool Tom Fischer, who never could be fooled. "Keep your eyes open, boys," he cautioned. "This is one of these slick fellows from New York. Like as not he is one of them financiers. Bet he's heard that a new railway is going through here. Like as not, he's come to buy up the land. Now I was reading in the paper the other day how oil was discovered in a little place out West and everybody got rich by it except the people who lived there. The New York fellows slipped in and bought up the land. Don't be taken in by this fellow. Maybe he is a skinflint."

This was denied indignantly by those who had received the stranger's tips. Everybody knew his name. Five minutes after he had written it in a bold hand on the soiled pages of the Mansion House register, it had gone around Holyboro—*T. Tetherington Bellows*. It was on everybody's lips. Restlessly the crowd in front of the Mansion House grew. One or two bolder spirits peeped into the barber shop,

only to rush back to the crowd. "I just saw him give the barber five dollars." The crowd surged against the door of the barber-shop, just as the swinging doors parted, and T. Tetherington Bellows, arrayed in a morning suit of light tweeds, emerged. The crowd gave way and without a word, smiling, he passed among them and crossing the street leisurely, strolled down toward the Town Square.

That was a place where there was a monument, two saloons, two boarding houses, a blacksmith shop and a Carnegie Library. In the center of the square stood a little monument—to the veterans of the Civil War. On one side of the square stood an empty office building, its concrete walls self-conscious and absurd. Wood was good enough for Holyboro—B'gosh! Following at a respectful distance, the crowd watched Bellows stop on the corner and gaze around the square.

"He's taking out his notebook! He's writing down something!"

Then they saw him continue and enter the empty office building. In the window of this, a desk and chair had been placed. Also, they saw a large wooden box. Standing six deep across the sidewalk, the faces of the more aggressive pressed to the window glass, they watched the large, good-looking gentleman in the light tweeds enter the empty office building and sit down at the desk. They saw him take out a large book from the top drawer and write continuously in it. In ten minutes he was through.

"He's opening the box."

What was in it? The crowd pressed nearer the window. One by one they saw him take out dark-colored bottles wrapped with gold foil. He deposited these in a row on the top of the desk until they counted twelve.

"It's champagne," whispered the awed voice of a man who had once been in Chicago. "They say it costs four dollars a bottle."

"Let me see, four times twelve. Forty-eight dollars! Wheel!"

By this time curiosity was boundless. They saw T. Tetherington Bellows open the twelve quarts of champagne.

"Gee, I wonder if he's going to drink them all."

But holding up the bottles, one by one, Bellows poured their contents on the floor of the empty store.

"Gosh!"

It was the gasp of a multitude. Forty-eight dollars' worth of champagne thrown away! And they had seen it, there, right before their own eyes. Finally a ray of truth dawned on one of them.

"Gee, he must be rich!"

It was obvious. Even Holyboro knew this type of the idle rich. Had they not read in the Sunday supplements of Boston newspapers that rich men sometimes take their pleasure in strange ways? But forty-eight dollars' worth of champagne!

"He's coming out!"

The crowd gave way. Still smiling, but without a word, T. Tetherington Bellows walked slowly back to his hotel. At the corner of the square he again stopped, took out his notebook and wrote something down. Then he continued his walk, very leisurely, and going to the hotel, retired at once to his room.

But Holyboro was not satisfied. Foolish stranger, he, who thought he could enter a serene New England village, throw it into a turmoil of excitement such as it had not seen since war was declared against Spain, and remain quiet about it. The more responsible persons of the town, including the Justice of the Peace, held a conference in the bar of the hotel. They were in the middle of their

speculations, when the proprietor came in and began taking down all the bottles from the shelves.

"Finish your drinks, gentlemen," he said; "they are the last that will be served here."

"What do you mean?" demanded the Justice of the Peace. "This town hasn't gone dry?"

"No, but this hotel has," and the proprietor winked. "Sold out just now to Mr. Bellows. His orders—bar closed."

Out into the crowd flew the Justice of the Peace. Possessing news of such importance, he at once became a dominating figure. Awkward, lanky, scraggly-chinned New England manor lords, clad in shiny black, crowded around him. The transaction was paramount. Why should this fine, prosperous-looking man pay two thousand, seven hundred and forty-eight dollars and fifty cents for the Mansion House of Holyboro? They were still discussing it when T. Tetherington Bellows quickly walked from the hotel. Again they followed him. They followed him back to the Town Square.

They saw him go into a saloon. They heard him say to Ike Barges, "How much will you take for your property?"

Ike, a dried up little man, who always wore a long white apron, upon which he dried the glasses which he washed every so often, although washing the apron only once a week, scratched his uncombed hair.

"Dunno," said Ike. "This is a good business, I don't know whether I want to sell or not," sparring for time, while he took T. Tetherington's measure.

"How much?" repeated Bellows.

Whereupon Ike made up his mind, added four hundred dollars to the value of the property, took a gasp and proposed:

"Seventeen hundred dollars."

"Done!" exclaimed Bellows, and began writing off a check.

"Gosh!" echoed the multitude outside the door. One of the town youngsters crawled on his hands and knees and peeped in under the swinging door. In a moment, rabbit-like, he scurried back with the news.

"He's telling Ike to break all the bottles!" the youngster announced.

"Gosh!"

So, as still smiling, still not saying a word, Bellows again passed out among them and walked down the street, and stopped in front of the next and last saloon in Holyboro, they guessed what was coming. But still their curiosity had not been satisfied, and they watched the proceedings out. A friend of this saloon-keeper, scurrying ahead of the crowd, reached the scene before Bellows.

"He paid Ike seventeen hundred dollars," whispered the informer to Bill Gross. "Stick a hundred dollars onto your price, and give me half of it. The city chap'll pay it all right. He's got more money than brains."

Holyboro felt indignant; more so when, without a protest, T. Tetherington Bellows signed a check for eighteen hundred dollars and closed up the saloon.

"A pity," someone said, "that the saloon-keepers took such an advantage of Mr. Bellows."

But after Bellows returned to his hotel, the Justice of the Peace called a mass-meeting. The Justice succeeding in having himself installed as chairman, the meeting went on.

"I move," said Abner Green, "that a committee be appointed to call upon Mr. Bellows and ask him—but we must be careful not to offend him—to explain the purpose of his visit to Holyboro." Unanimously voted, the Justice appointed Abner Green, Ike Barges and himself as the com-

mittee. At once they went to call on Mr. Bellows. But at that particular moment Mr. Bellows was very busy with the former owner of the Mansion House.

This man finally laughed uproariously, and leaving Mr. Bellows, quietly engaged an empty store upon which he put a sign reading, "Saloon will be opened here to-morrow."

Coming from the other direction, the crowd descending upon the Mansion Hotel did not notice this sign. Solemnly the three committeemen climbed the creaking stairs to the second floor front where Mr. Bellows had his room. Down on the sidewalks and in the road, the citizens of Holyboro separated into groups, arguing about Mr. Bellows, and his motives for visiting the town. Why had he bought out the saloons? But T. Tetherington, carefully hiding himself behind the curtain, had seen the crowd coming down Main Street, and noticing the Justice of the Peace, Abner Green and Ike Barges, self-importantly walking in the lead, he had guessed what was up. "Fine!" he murmured and chuckled.

When he heard a knock on his door, his good-natured face at once became a study in sadness. Affecting a pose of great depression, he sat down at the little wooden table holding his head in his hands and staring blankly out of the window. "Come in," he called in a voice from which all the life seemed gone. The committeemen were a little disappointed at his voice. It was dreary. They had expected a more hearty welcome. They were more amazed, too, to find that the sprightly, happy Mr. Bellows, whom they had seen walking down Main Street, had become transformed into a figure of melancholy.

"What can I do for you, gentlemen?" asked Bellows courteously but sadly.

The Justice of the Peace fumbled at the badge of his office, as if to reassure himself. Abner Green pulled his beard. Ike Barges wet a finger and rubbed at his celluloid collar. As if to make his neighbor broach the subject, each nudged the other. It was a shame to bother Mr. Bellows now. He seemed to be in such trouble.

"Allow me, gentlemen," said Bellows, producing a little bottle filled with a reddish liquid.

In confusion they watched him pour out the drinks. He heard Abner Green whisper to the Justice.

"Ah, no," smiled Bellows, "this is not alcohol but grape juice. Mother and I always drink grape juice."

"You see, Mr. Bellows," began the Justice, "Holyboro is interested in you. We have taken a liking to you. We were wondering if you would be so kind as to tell us—"

—"the reason for my visit here?" supplemented Bellows. "With pleasure, gentlemen; but there's no need of bothering about it. I'm leaving on the afternoon train."

They exchanged crestfallen glances.

"But the hotel you bought?" gasped the Justice of the Peace.

"And my saloon?" exclaimed Ike Barges.

"And the other saloon," chimed in Abner Green.

Heavily Bellows sank down in the chair. They had never seen a man look so sad. They saw him swallow—distinctly, three times. He seemed overcome by his emotions. Obviously, this fine gentleman was in great distress, and something in Holyboro had caused it. As the committee of the citizens, they resolved it was their duty to know who had done it. They told him so.

"Ah, gentlemen," began Bellows, "it's no use. All my life I have devoted to building up towns and cities, great properties. I have made



the Mexican deserts bloom and abandoned mines give up their fruits of gold. And then—ah, yes!—someone spoke to me of Holyboro. You see, in New York we have an organization which is called the Human Welfare Society. On its records are the names of cities, towns, villages, needing help. As president of this organization, I investigated Holyboro. I found the integrity of its citizens to be without reproach. I found the possibilities of its future to be as glorious as the sunset. But, gentlemen, I found, too, that you had a canker in Holyboro—a vile poison that was eating out the life of your town. It was the selling of alcohol. So I came here to try and end it. I bought all the places where alcohol was sold and closed them. Ah, how my heart danced! Holyboro had become worthy to be saved. I planned to develop Holyboro. I would interest capital here, build factories back on the hills there. I had planned a big summer hotel and bungalows, we would build fine roads for automobilists, and the dawn of the new Holyboro would come”—and Bellows paused. “But, gentlemen, I have tried and failed.”

Obviously stirred, they were breathing aloud. Then Bellows saw that he had made them all sorry for him and left them anxious, too. Their civic pride was stirred. The picture Bellows had painted of the new Holyboro glowed in their imaginations. And most of all, each one of them was wondering how much he was going to make out of this new Holyboro. And now the chance was gone. No, it wasn't! Mr. Bellows had no right to give up like this. He *must* stay. They told him so.

“But, gentlemen,” he pleaded. “what's the use? My organization refuses to invest a nickel in Holyboro, so long as liquor is sold here.”

“But it isn't being sold,” protested Abner Green. “You've bought up all the saloons.”

With a tired smile, Bellows led him to the window. “You see that,” exclaimed Bellows, pointing down the street to the store where the hotel-keeper had hung up a sign. “Can you read that?—*Saloon opened here to-morrow.*”

The Justice of the Peace was a man of action. He scampered down the stairs into the crowd. Bellows watched him arguing with the five richest citizens of the town. Together they stamped up the street and tore down the offensive saloon sign. Together they stamped back and called on Mr. Bellows.

“There will not be another drop of liquor sold here,” declared the Justice positively. “The citizens of Holyboro are determined on this. We have a local option law, and we shall vote a special election at once.”

Bellows' face magically turned to sunshine.

“Ah,” he said, slapping them all on the back. “You are wonderful. I love you all. A toast, gentlemen. A toast drunk with the pure juice of the grape, to the fall of King Alcohol, and the glorious new Holyboro.”

After they had gone two things of importance happened. The first was that Bellows sneaked downstairs and brought to his room a bottle of beer that had not been destroyed.

The second was that the three richest citizens of Holyboro got around the Justice of the Peace and said: “This is all very fine, a new Holyboro, but what are we going to get? This man is coming in here, is going to invest the capital of his company, and is going to make all the money out of it. Now I think it is only fair that the citizens of Holyboro should be allowed to invest their own money in the improvement of their own city. We should

profit, too. Not let these slick New Yorkers make it all."

The Justice of the Peace nodded his head. "There's a point in what you say. I'll see Mr. Bellows at once," he declared.

"We'll wait for you," they assured him.

When the Justice of the Peace entered Mr. Bellows' room, he saw that gentleman hastily cover something with the bed comforter and then rise with a broad smile. Briefly the Justice told him how the five men felt.

"My dear friend," replied Bellows, "why talk about money? Money bores me. I care more about humanity and doing good. We don't need any of your money here. We have plenty of it. It means nothing to us. Why, we don't care that for it." Taking a fifty-dollar bill out of his pocketbook, he held it under a match until it shriveled completely into ashes. The Justice of the Peace turned white.

"I only did that," smiled Bellows, "to show you what I think of money. Why, when the new Holyboro comes we'll have so much money here in town that there will be four banks."

Excusing himself, the Justice of the Peace hurried away. When he told the "three richest citizens" how Mr. Bellows had burned the fifty-dollar bill before his eyes they were impressed. But their faces set hard, and a determined expression came into their eyes. Each and every one had resolved upon a fight. They shook hands on it. It was a compact. They all said, "We'll make him. He's got to take our money."

**B**LITHELY humming *Un Peu d'Amour*, T. Tetherington Bellows was reading reports on the characters of three men. His perfectly booted feet cocked high over a table-top, he was musingly and

softly reading aloud; now and then snatches of the song crept in.

"Just a little love, a little kiss . . . Abner Green, age forty-nine, born in Holyboro, renowned chiefly for his stinginess. Hm, hm . . . I would give you all the world for this . . . declined to subscribe for the support of the poorhouse, disinherited a son, swindled two families on mortgages . . . Just a little love, a little kiss." Nonchalantly, Bellows tossed the paper aside.

"Another fine citizen," he murmured, picking up the second sheet. "Ike Barges, age unknown, birthplace unknown, kept a notorious saloon. Will serve drunken men with drinks and keep them drunk, chiefly workmen on pay night. The cause of half the poverty in Holyboro. Has made big money out of it, and has never given a cent to charity . . . Ah, Ike!" and Bellows burst into song: "*I love you, I love you, I love you. You are the ideal of my dreams.*"

The paper was tossed aside. A third and last sheet he read aloud to himself.

"Silas Hawks, richest farmer in Holyboro, called a just man, drove his only daughter out of the house, nagged his wife to death, has accumulated a small fortune by dishonest real estate deals . . ." and for a third time Bellows hummed. "*You're the girl with the charming face . . . Dear Silas. You're just the little girl I'm looking for.*"

Carefully folding the papers and putting them in his pocket, T. Tetherington Bellows left his room. He was dressed for the occasion in a shiny top hat and a perfectly fitting cut-away, that showed a wide, prosperous-looking expanse of buff-colored waistcoat. His striped trousers, creased like a sword-edge, were properly adjusted to the fraction of an inch. Riches? At once you felt

in the presence of them. Outside the hotel, he was met by the crowd; and he noted with satisfaction that the three men whose pedigrees he had just examined were in the front rank.

"Good morning, Mr. Bellows," called Abner Green. "We want to see you on something important."

"Sorry, gentlemen, no time!" and turning leisurely on his heel, Bellows proceeded in his splendor down Main Street to his office in the window of the empty store. The three leading citizens of Holyboro drew aside.

"This fellow is making a big mistake," said Abner Green, "if he thinks he is going to turn us off like that."

"Yes," squeaked Silas Hawks, "if there's money to be made here, we want our share of it."

"We'll get it," declared Ike Barges. "We'll show him a trick."

And then they put their heads together, planning a scheme that was to upset Bellows. Meanwhile the object of their philanthropy had arrived at the square to find a second crowd besieging his office. The afternoon before the word had gone around that within twenty-four hours the company for developing Holyboro formally would be opened. And Bellows knew. There had been a run on the bank of a neighboring town. Smiling, he speculated how the people had drawn out their savings, eager to invest in a project that would make of their town a thriving New England city. He knew that the ministers had spoken in favor of it. Was not one of his conditions that Holyboro go dry? He felt all the women, all the better element of the citizenry were ready to give him their loyal support. And as he saw how they had stood there for hours formed in double lines, their savings in their pockets so that they might

go in and buy stock, he smiled again. But in that smile was nothing sinister. With a cheery greeting Bellows passed among them and entered his office.

Watching from outside the windows, the crowd saw him take from his desk a large book filled with imposing certificates. In plain view Bellows began to write in this, tearing off certificate after certificate, folding them, inserting them in long envelopes and sending them out to be mailed. They did not know it was not an accident that he picked the shifty-eyed son of Ike Barges to take the envelopes to the Post Office. This went on for half an hour and the crowd began to get angry.

"You see what he is doing. He's selling the stock to people out of town."

"Probably all those New York financiers are in on it."

"Yeah, he's mailing them their certificates to-day."

"It isn't right. He's got to let us buy in the company, too." One or two raised their voices in protest. Bellows could hear a growing murmur. And as if to quiet it, he opened the door and held up his hand. In so doing he quite carelessly displayed a large wallet filled with money in his waistcoat pocket. The effect was magical. Money! The man simply exuded it. And the greed of the people rose, as trout to a fly.

"When are you going to put the stock on sale?" somebody called.

"Please," begged Bellows. "There is so much first to be done."

His evasive reply convinced them that he indeed had not the slightest intention of letting them in on the proposition. Which was true. It was not Bellows' way to defraud poor people. He still had a shred of conscience left. Never had he done it, never would he begin. His prey were those who preyed upon others.

That was his creed, that and to make the unhappy happy.

He bided his time. He had not long to wait. Soon he saw a commotion in the crowd. Abner Green, Silas Hawks and Ike Barges were shouldering their way into the office. With new boldness they slammed the door behind them. Abner was the spokesman.

"Now see here, Mr. Bellows," he began, "we mean business. We know what you're doing."

"You bet we do," chuckled Silas.

And Ike Barges drew an envelope from his pocket and grinned.

"You're pretty smart, Mr. Bellows, but you're not as smart as you think you are. You gave this to my boy to mail and he brought it to me. Now what have you got to say to this?" And accusingly Ike laid a stock certificate in front of Bellows. It was for five thousand shares in the Holyboro Welfare Company, par value one hundred dollars a share. A five-hundred-thousand-dollar certificate!

"See," said Ike triumphantly, "We're on now. You're just running this off for the benefit of your rich friends in New York," and triumphantly he pointed to the name on the certificate. It was made out to one of the greatest financiers in America, Robert K. Glover.

Bellows seemed to be distressed. He even gasped.

"I'll have you in jail for this," spluttered Bellows, "tampering with the United States mail."

"No you won't," retorted Ike. "There was no stamp on the envelope. Smart kid I've got. Just like the old man."

The idea of Robert K. Glover taking half a million dollars' worth of stock in the Holyboro Company, had driven Abner and his cronies frantic. They were prepared to go to

any extreme to make Bellows take their money.

"We each want thirty thousand dollars' worth of stock," declared Abner Green, "and we've got the money right here to pay for it."

"Can't do it," said Bellows firmly.

"You've got to," shrilled Silas Hawks.

As if in confirmation, there came a roar from the crowd outside. Over the shoulders of his visitors, Bellows could see the people of Holyboro, their faces pressed against the windows of the store, desperate faces, with all that eagerness to make money.

"And why, gentlemen, do I have to sell you stock?" asked Bellows.

"Because we control this town," spoke up Ike. "And you won't be able to do a thing here if the Board of Trustees refuses to grant you a franchise. How are you going to build your street railway if we don't give you a franchise? How are you going to build all those fine boulevards without a franchise? And the electric-light plant, hey?"

"Yes, Mr. Bellows," chimed in Abner, "you're pretty smart, but you can't fool us."

Bellows' face was a study. He mopped his brow. He ran his finger under his collar. He looked crestfallen.

"Gentlemen," he finally surrendered. "You've got me. Understand, I protest against it. I do not want to sell you this stock. You are making me do it. You are hard men."

"But we're just men," declared Abner Green. "That's all we want, justice."

"And maybe you're not going to get it," whispered Bellows to himself.

Opening the door he called in three citizens. "I want you to be witnesses to this," he said. "I have not offered to sell these men a single



share of stock in my company. They came in my office and with threats of blackmail—"

"That's a hard word, Mr. Bellows," interrupted Silas Hawks.

"Blackmail," repeated Bellows, "and contemptible threats, they have forced me to sell them each thirty thousand dollars' worth of stock. You heard that?"

The three witnesses had heard it, and their anger knew no bounds. Why was it that these men, Abner and his cronies, always made all the money in Holyboro? It was a shame. Later, they resolved to ask Mr. Bellows to let them in. Not now. They were ashamed of Abner, Silas and Ike—all fellow citizens. Perhaps he would. "Certainly, Mr. Bellows, we will remember that. If you like we will make affidavits to what we have just heard."

"Fine!" declared Bellows. "Tomorrow morning give them to the Justice of the Peace."

"That bluff don't go, Mr. Bellows," sneered Ike. "We're inside the law."

Rolling his tongue in his cheek, Bellows then turned on Abner Green, Silas and Ike. "Gentlemen," he said, "Let's split the difference. Won't you each be satisfied with fifteen thousand dollars' worth?"

"No, we won't. Thirty thousand is the figure."

"All right, gentlemen. I submit to your dictation."

Thereupon he wrote out three stock certificates and collected ninety thousand dollars in cash and certified checks. He noticed that each man tried to be the last to get out of the room, and that each knew what the other man's game was. Finally desperate, Abner Green drew him aside.

"Mr. Bellows, let me buy ten thousand dollars' worth more, and I'll give you some interesting informa-

tion about Silas Hawks," and Abner winked.

"Not a penny more," said Bellows firmly.

Ike drew him aside: "Say, Mr. Bellows, I've been a good friend of yours. I sold out my saloon to you, and you want me for a friend. I can tip you off on how to put the knife into Abner Green there. I'll do it if you will let me have another five thousand dollars' worth."

"Sorry, gentlemen, can't be done."

"It's no use," whispered Abner to Silas. "All his rich friends in New York will get the rest of the stock."

And with much awkward bowing they left him there, proudly bearing away three large certificates, done in different colored inks, the very sight of which looked imposing and inspired confidence. And when after a time Bellows followed them, he was pursued to his hotel by the crowd, surrounding him on all sides, flaunting money in his face, begging him to take it. But he remained firm.

There was no train leaving Holyboro that night. At eight o'clock the citizens saw the rich Mr. Bellows (he had ninety thousand dollars now in his wallet) leave town for an automobile ride. Three hours later the stationman at a town on another railroad line sold a large jolly-looking gentleman a ticket for Boston. The next morning Abner, Ike and Silas came to call on Mr. Bellows. They were told he was not in. Indeed, that he had not been in all night, but that all his baggage was in the hotel. Of course he was coming back. Besides, were they not each the owners of thirty thousand dollars' worth of stock. Of course none of them realized what the company's assets were. All it professed to be was a Welfare Concern. Webster defines welfare as: Well doing in any respect.

And they were done well.

**T**WO weeks on the Orange County farm had made Sneggs, the nervous, almost hysterical temperance lecturer, into a new man. Long walks, sound food, fishing, perfect peace of mind, had driven some of the fanaticism from his eyes. One day he received a letter from his good friend, T. Tetherington Bellows, who had made it all possible.

My dear Mr. Sneggs:

I think if you had better financial

support, that you could have better success with your work. I enclose, therefore, my check for twenty thousand dollars, which you are at liberty to use in doing personal temperance work. I prefer that you begin on Chicago. I never did like the way they make a cocktail out there.

Best regards,

T. TETHERINGTON BELLOWES.

P. S.—Don't bother with Holyboro. I hear it's gone dry.

## EDISON MAKES A DRESS SUIT COMFORTABLE

**O**VER at the Edison plant in West Orange, N. J., there is Mr. Edison's laboratory concerning which almost everyone who reads has some knowledge. But in back of it is still another big room, a sort of holy of holies—a place where Mr. Edison goes to do his real work and his real thinking, and it would be about as easy to get in there with him as it would to drop in and have a chat with King George of England at the Buckingham some morning when he is eating his oatmeal.

But a few of the chosen have seen this room, and all who have had this privilege have marveled at an adornment or decoration or trophy—they cannot quite classify it—that is nailed to the wall.

Mrs. Edison is prominent socially in the Oranges, as well as being active in every charity and organization worth while. At one of the social functions she begged her husband to accompany her and meet the hostess. He tried to back down when he learned he must wear a dress suit, but he had given his promise and was held to it.

There he stood, after greeting the hostess and many others, in a lonely corner, a picture of misery. Mrs. Edison found him and urged him to mingle with the others.

"I'm not feeling well, Mother," he said, "I think I better go home and lie down," and tender-hearted Mrs. Edison graciously permitted him to go after he had made his excuses. Straightway to this strictly private holy of holies he went, the big room back of his laboratory. And straightway he divested himself of the dress suit, got into a chemical-stained old suit and then proceeded to nail his dress suit to the wall!

"I've got solid comfort out of that suit ever since," explains Mr. Edison.

# THE THIRD OLD MAN

*Here Is a Strange Combination of Greed, Logic, Brotherly Love, Fear and Renunciation—to the Accompaniment of a Player-piano. The Story Fairly Oozes Human Nature.*

By EUGENE P. LYLE, JR.

Author of "The Missourian," "D'Artagnan of Kansas," etc.

MR. CLINTON SNECKWITH was strong on logic, for logic was a congenial familiar, cold and bloodless. Then somehow it always seemed to work against the other fellow. Refusing an accommodation, old Clint Sneckwith had only to say: "Why, man, it ain't logical." As, of course, it wasn't; doubtful security never is. The man could see that himself, and go on away.

Logic was justice, too. Yeh, yeh, bound to be. Go ahead and exact your pound of flesh, or pint of tears, or kilowatt of anguish, or whatever is named in the bond. Eh, why not, why not? Indeed, why not, since never a Portia came among his debtors to rout logic with a sublime quibble!

The old note-shaver called himself a banker, and he called his shop a bank. Well, he had justification of a sort. The State laws conceded that the imitation-marble, Grecian temple cubby-hole where he did business was actually a bank, and Clint Sneckwith never did concede that it was a blind for pillage, so respectability managed to gum-shoe not deeper than the soles in mud, anyway.

Nor would Sneckwith own himself a miser, and carefully he demonstrated that he was not. With tight-lipped resolution he put on a clean collar every morning. A tailor made

his clothes. A cleaner pressed them. At 9:15 A. M. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, while he speared open his mail, a bootblack slipped within the brass rail and polished his shoes. Each third Saturday, when the bank closed, the barber top-worked his white badger poll. There was even a box of unimpeachable Havanas in his desk, which opened for gilt-edged borrowers and the State examiner. None of this was like a miser. It was good taste, simplicity, also money guilefully spent. It saved him from keeping a car, from paying pew-rent, from donating to charities. He could shake his head, but the petitioners could not shake theirs, thinking him a miser. There was the clean collar; they could not. What else they thought did not matter.

Mr. Sneckwith's many visitors might have denoted him a popular member of the community. Yet, he being Sneckwith, they denoted only the popularity of money; or rather, the hatefulness of not having money. Because, whether they came to him in the marbled cubby-hole or to his cheerless home, they came either to get money out of him or to get out of paying money to him. Hence his two visitors one wretched night in December. They were no exception. One was in one category, the other in the other. Apparently he had only to say "Nuh, nuh," or "Yeh,

yeh," according to the logic of the situation; and yet these two particular visits in combination so outraged money-lending routine as to crack the ridge-pole of the flinty old wad's sheltering philosophy.

The episode began in the well-known wearisome manner. A man wanted more time on a note, and the security wasn't so as Mr. Sneckwith could notice it. He came after supper. The ramshackle house among the bare trees on the edge of town was desolate except for the master. The negro woman cook had heaped the dishes in the kitchen sink to be washed in the morning, and gone on home. Sneckwith had settled himself till bedtime in the musty front room. He sat at an old-fashioned desk of numerous stuffed pigeon-holes, and totalled fat columns. He did not have the actual gold to count, but the figures told him how much he might count. He had the imagination. The white fingers that held the pen crooked as if the feel of milled coin were between them.

When the bell rang, his head and Adam's apple went up with a jerk. Then he arose and did several little things. He did them by rote, much as an actor assumes an expression before coming on the stage. There was a stale, half-smoked cigar on the mantel, which he lighted and got to going well, and so became the banker at home, opulently smoking his after-dinner cigar. The room was chilled, but from the wood box he laid two sticks on the embers in the fireplace, and added a sliver of fat pine to summon a convincing half-hundred crackling sparks of cozy luxury. The ledger on which he had been working he dropped back into the deep bottom drawer of his desk, and on the desk he faced down another book, so that the lamp revealed the title on the tooled-leather back—

"Choice Literature—Vol. VI." It had belonged to his dead wife. Then he himself, there being only he in the childless house, switched on the hall light and opened the outer door.

The man who asked if Mr. Sneckwith lived there, and hesitated, and diffidently stepped in out of the December sleet, was, at a glance, not a worthy audience for the care of preparation. The banker at home puffed truculently on the wasted remnant of cigar as he nodded and beckoned the man into the front room, where the sliver of pine hissed and spat like a tortured serpent.

They were now two white-headed old men, but the visitor was not short, clean-shaven, close-cropped, tailored, keen, hard. He was long, loose-framed, bearded, mud-splattered, mild; would be genial if given a chance. He rather wistfully sought encouragement for such in his host's countenance.

"Roads certainly are bad," he said as he pulled off a pair of scuffed gauntlets and bent over to manipulate his knuckle joints in the blaze. "Certainly are, and I drove in since supper. Didn't dast leave my stock before, it being so clost onto lambing time, and—"

"What name?"

It brought the man up short.

"Wirt's the name, Mr. Sneckwith. G. L. Wirt. I—"

"Wirt. Yeh. Some o' Jake Gerhardt's paper. Fertilizer note. Due to-morrow. Got the notice I sent you, I suppose?"

The man nodded gloomily. "Yes, sir, that's how I come to know Jake went and discounted my note. But last spring, when I bought the guano of him, he said—"

"Mr. Wirt," interposed the banker, "what's on the paper does the saying. Gerhardt needed money last August—"



"Reckon he did, the way he loaded up on peanuts and what the war busting loose did to 'em. But ne' mind. Jake sold you our notes, and I'm right sorry for Jake, but Mr. Sneckwith—well, the fact is, I—"

"Just one moment, Mr. Wirt." The banker knew so well what was coming. From a pigeon-hole he extracted a circular letter on the bank's stationery. "You got one like this, eh?" and he read aloud:

"Probably on account of general financial conditions, we have had an unusual number of requests for extension, to all of which we have had to reply that we can consider no extension whatever."

"Seems to me," Mr. Sneckwith added, as he skidded the sheet back on his desk—"seems to me that was toler'ble plain language; yet the whole passel o' you Gerhardt paper keep a-coming and want extensions."

The scrap of Gerhardt paper there present would have spoken, but Mr. Sneckwith forestalled him.

"Yeh, I know, 'thout you telling me. Know it by heart."

"By heart, Mr. Sneckwith?" the old countryman ventured mildly.

"Eh? Wha's 'at? Yes, sir; heart, I said—by heart. Listen here. Wet weather keeps you from threshing your peanuts, which was to pay for the fertilizer you growed 'em with. Yeh, and that means a fourth to a half damaged in the shock. Top o' that, the market is down two-bits below cost of production on what you have got. Don't I know? Ain't I heard it twenty times?"

"Then don't it seem right hard, wouldn't you think?"

"Yeh, for collections. Guess you can see yourself, Mr. Wirt, that it only makes your security that much wobblier, and you mortgaged to the latch of the hen-house as 'tis. Now you come wanting an extension, wanting an exception in your case.

Nuh, nuh, it ain't logical. Exceptions ain't ever logical, Mr. Wirt."

The countryman straightened where he stood by the hearth as if age-weary. His lifted brows deepened the horizontal lines across his forehead like a harrowed field, and the gentle eyes widened. He could understand heart-breaking buffets from impersonal circumstances, but not a wanton cut to the quick from just a gray-haired old man like himself.

"But, Mr. Sneckwith, I wanted to explain. That is, I need the money to—"

"Need the— But it ain't your money, Mr. Wirt. It's my money."

"I need it to— The fact is, I want to buy one o' these—you know—piano-player contraptions. You know, a piano with the new-patent fixings so's anybody can play tunes. I—"

He was pathetically eager to rush on and explain, but something in the working features of the money-lender banked the tumble of words. Mr. Sneckwith had dropped his cigar, and his jaw hung slack. He glared bewildered at the toil-gnarled, inoffensive old pauper who could stand there and ask for an extension to buy a—a—

"A—what?"

"Why, a—you know—a piano-player. I—"

Yeh, he said it, all right. And it wasn't taxes. It wasn't insurance. Nor clover seed. Not a sick wife. Not even a dead horse. Nor yet a baby that was expected. It wasn't any of those conventional whines.

"Piano-player? Piano-player?" babbled Mr. Sneckwith.

Evidently the suppliant realized that he had blurted it out in the worst possible way. The stupefaction of the man he hoped to placate made him remember something, and hastily he fumbled through the pock-

ets of his shaggy old overcoat and found a sheet of country-store note paper, heavily and laboriously written on both sides in ink. What this was soon became apparent. The old farmer had foreseen his clumsiness of speech, and he had made a written memorandum of the case as it lay on his own heart; therewith, the angels helping, he hoped to render it as persuasive when he should try to indent the heart of this man before him.

Sneckwith's lips tightened, his frown tightened. There was the beginning of an ominous spluttering within. The visitor made haste. He fumbled open the sheet as if he were charged with crime and it would clear him. He had trouble getting the penned lines in focus. But at last the weaving strokes formed a word and part of another, and the meaning of them got to the confused retina of his mental vision.

"It's—it's my sister's boy," he burst forth desperately. "They live in town here. Her husband has been dead nearly two years now. Well, Eddie, he—"

"Uh-huh," snorted the banker, rousing at the sound of something familiar again, "usual story. Boy good-for-nothing. In scrape. Got to have money to get out. Hasn't any. I know."

"No, no," Wirt protested anxiously. "It's because he'll have money—that's the trouble."

"What—what?" demanded Sneckwith. "You mean you want money to stop him from getting money?"

"Yes, that's it. You see—"

"I see. You're 'fraid he'll begin stealing."

"Shucks, Mr. Sneckwith!" The countryman smiled. "No, I reckon you'd call it coming by money honest, all right."

"Wait," pleaded the other. "Just a moment. I can't follow you. Now,

Mr. Wirt, what in the name of—"

"But it's *easy* money, Mr. Sneckwith. Don't you see? Easy mon—"

"H'mph, money's money."

"No, it isn't, either. No sir-ee!"

The mild old man was showing some fanatical warmth. "No, sir, not when it's a boy's chance one way, and a baited trap in perdition the other way. Now about my note; if I could get let off for a spell, that's Eddie's chance, whilst—"

"How so, how so? By blowing it in for piano-players?"

"You see," and the old man smiled gently, "Eddie is bound he'll get his mother one for Christmas to surprise her."

"Christmas? Chris— Say, is she extra needing a piano-player?"

"No. Oh, no. But Eddie is extra needing to give her one. And he's going in for easy money to do it, too, unless—unless I can lend him enough for a first payment."

But from the distressed sniffing of the banker the old man sensed that he was not putting it very well, and he made another try at his memorandum. Besides, he had come to the hard part to bring home to anybody else, although it was the part most inspired by the version written on his heart. The paper trembled a little as he held it from him for the right focus.

"It's just this way," he went on hurriedly, "there's the two little girls, and Eddie, he knows how Polly—how his mother grieves to herself over the piano being took away by the installment man when Ed died and the girls not going on with their lessons, and both of them with a plumb inborn aptitude for tunes. But Eddie wants she should have the player contraption, too, so's she can take some joy in life her own self in between the five-finger exercises of them pig-tailed little tykes."

"All right, for the love of glory,

let him, then!" cried the banker. "Let him, if the money's so easy, and Lord knows it ought to be easy for any such fool nonsense!"

"But Mr. Sneckwith, it's to come from the Southside Investment Corporation. You know what that is?"

"Huh, do I? But that's not easy money. That's a bucket shop. They'll skin him alive."

"Worse'n that, Mr. Sneckwith. They want him to skin his friends—and Eddie's got lots of friends—that he'll draw as customers. They've offered him a position."

"Oh, that's different," said Mr. Sneckwith, puzzled. "Ought to be a good thing. What's the difficulty?"

It was the countryman's turn to be puzzled. It was as if each old man had suddenly begun to talk a different language. But the countryman, floundering, patiently tried to make himself understood.

"The boy," he said, "just won't see that they're after buying the trust and regard of his friends with their stinking money. He won't see that it's any different from selling a plow or five pounds of staples in Jackson & Montague's, where he's at now. With him it's just changing to another job where the pay's better, and he can make things easier for his mother. He don't see, I tell you, that them slick bucket-shop fellows are aiming to bid in his manhood—yes, sir, his very soul. And when I think of Polly. . . . Look here, Mr. Sneckwith, please give me time on this note. Eddie agrees he'll stick with Jackson & Montague if he can swing the piano-player for his mother by Christmas, and he'll pay me back all right, and it—it will save him. Only till spring, Mr. Sneckwith. By then I'll be marketing my lambs, and—"

The banker had drawn a packet of notes from a pigeon-hole, had thumbed them over until he came

to the one with G. L. Wirt signed on the back, had squinted at the penciled total of principal and interest in the upper left-hand corner, and now he interrupted:

"Mr. Wirt, the amount of your obligation at the bank to-morrow, with interest from May 22nd, is \$144.20."

"Ye—yes, that's right," Wirt replied, not allowing his hopes to sink yet. "It's almost exactly the hundred 'n fifty for a first payment on the—"

"Mr. Wirt," inquired the banker as formal as ice, "you're not seriously expecting us to grant accommodations to buy—"

"But it's to turn a boy from—"

"Nonsense. To my mind, sir, you're in the boy's way, and anyhow— Say, look here. Maybe I got to listen to a borrower's troubles, but when a borrower goes to bringing somebody else's troubles and expects me to. . . . Soak my hide in brine, Wirt, it just ain't logical, that's what it ain't."

"No, I don't reckon 'tis," Wirt sadly agreed. "But somehow I can't help wondering, Mr. Sneckwith, s'posing sometime the logic of a thing was to your hurt—just s'posing—if then you'd stand by it."

The hard old man partly rose from his chair. Why, this was a thrust at the very core of his religion! "Would I—stand by it? I—I— Of course I would, to the last red cent, sir!" A martyr would have said the last drop of red blood, but the effect was as grim. He sat back, rather frightened at his own portrait of himself in the fancied crisis. "But lemme tell you," he said, breathing easier, "a logical man don't get into any such illogical position; like I'd be in, for instance—and mighty soon, too—if I didn't protect myself in matters like this here note of yours, Mr. Wirt. And that's more good logic, come to think of it."

The countryman was game. One who has often watched the promise of May shrivel under the sky of August finally learns the trick.

"I sort o' reckoned you'd look at it that way," he said, "so I come fixed to take up the note now, in case you did." Deep in his old overcoat pocket he dug out a small canvas seed sack that bulged with its circular-edged contents. "One forty-four and twenty cents, Mr. Sneckwith, if you don't mind counting it."

Mr. Sneckwith did not mind, although he was wrathful because of so much palaver when the man had the money on him all the while. He snatched off the string and poured coin and wads of bills on the desk. The coins were silver and nickel and even copper. Of the bills, there were no higher than a twenty, and very few of them. Coins and bills told of the long and patient scrimping that had gathered them together. The banker sorted with deft fingers as he counted; then counted them again.

"Yeh, c'rect," he announced. "And here's your note, canceled."

Wirt, mechanically taking the note, perceived that he still held his poor futile memorandum in his hand. He couldn't—no, not possibly—have done his case justice. The furrows in his brow were creases of pain as he looked at the hard old man sacking the money. No, and it would do no good to try and go over the thing again.

"I—I think," he spoke suddenly, as the banker was tying up the sack—"I think I'd like to leave this in there," and he folded the memorandum and thrust it into the sack with the money. "At the bank, tomorrow, when you open the sack, it will remind you, and you—perhaps you might have time to look it over. It—maybe I didn't just make myself clear, and if you really understood—"

"Think I might reconsider, eh? But 'twon't be a bit o' use."

"No, I s'pose not. But it's so mighty important—a boy's whole life—seems like something has just got to mix in and help."

"Providence? A miracle?" queried Mr. Sneckwith with an affable smirk. He did not believe in 'em. "But anyway," he added, "don't hope it'll be logic. Nuh, nuh, not logic. Well, guh-night, Wirt. Bad night for a long drive."

That thought gave him comfort as he securely bolted the door after his visitor. Then he saw to every fastening of door or window before taking himself upstairs in the silent house to bed.

As if the predatory minded fastenings! Mr. Sneckwith was awakened towards morning, for the increasing cold in his room made him sleep lightly. He lifted his ear from the pillow. His nerves strained for that sound again. If it were a loose shutter, or the sleet, or a drip from the eaves, or rats—or if it was something that was not—right! Wait—yes, there! *Shsish-shsosh*— There it was, scarcely audible. But he had a fugitive recollection that what had awakened him was a crash, like falling glass. *Shsish-shsosh*— The lone old man sat up in bed. He thought he identified the sound. Somebody in old wet shoes sloshing around—somebody downstairs!

There was no telephone. There wasn't even a pistol. Mr. Sneckwith regretted his economy, but rarely having money in the house, he had not considered burglar risk worth the insurance. Whereupon he remembered the money that Wirt had paid him. It was downstairs, downstairs in the top drawer of his desk. He remembered how much—one hundred and forty-four dollars and twenty cents. If he lost it, the same as a year's interest on twenty-four



hundred dollars, besides the twenty cents! The thought drew Mr. Sneckwith galvanically erect in his socks on the cold floor. The socks were woolen and fleece-lined, which he slept in from Thanksgiving until the first robin. It is not certain, nor was it in his own mind, that he had any idea of saving his treasure. Sheer fascination in beholding the sacrilege brought him creeping down the stairs.

But not a third of the way down he stopped and huddled back on his haunches, while yet in shadow, for a dull pulsing glow fell across the hall and the lower stairs from the open door of the front room. Through the spindles he could peer down into the room. His desk and the fireplace were in the direct slant of his vision. He knew already, because of the light, that somebody must have put wood on the dying embers in the fireplace. And so it was; and over the blaze, as close as he could get, crouched a wet and vagabondish figure, stripping a roast bone with his teeth. The bone was a left-over which was to have done for Mr. Sneckwith's breakfast. Mr. Sneckwith snarled under his breath. But another old dog, a bitterly ravenous old dog, had it now.

The prowler's grimy handkerchief that served him as mask had been pushed up across his nose to leave the mouth free, and this revealed the lean jaw, purplish and covered with an ashen stubble. As he stooped, letting the heat steam his sodden garments, and as the battered derby he wore was pulled over his eyes, dripping from its brim, there was also revealed the wet, matted hair on the back of his neck, and Sneckwith saw that it was white.

A veteran in crime he was undoubtedly, and at his ease in crime. A pane missing in the window, which he had cut away to undo the fasten-

ing, lay smashed on the floor, but his letting it slip could be accounted for by his stiffened fingers, which were still blue and warped from the cold. Neither cold nor hunger, though, accounted for his indifference to the occupant, or occupants, of the house. That reeked of the insolent craftsman. He must have studied the lay—isolation, no telephone, no dog, and as for occupants, one old man. Yet he was certainly a stranger. No local operator would try for a haul in the domicile of Sneckwith. He was some footsore yeggman off the road.

He reluctantly tossed the bone to the fire, and stood up. It was time to get to work. Apparently he had satisfied himself already that there was no extravagance of plate in dining-room or kitchen. He stood, crouched as to shoulders, neck spiked forward from turned-up collar, eyes above the soiled handkerchief darting here and there. Mr. Sneckwith, peering down, shivered in his flannel night-shirt and woolen socks. If the robber were to come upstairs!

But the robber was professionally taking stock of his immediate zone of operations. The quick, restless survey began and ended with the desk. There was nothing else, except the chairs, a mildewed horse-hair sofa, and some pine bookshelves stuffed with old account books, letter files, and bundles of long-forgotten documents. Mr. Sneckwith craned his neck, advanced his nose between the spindles. At a slew-foot limp, rotted shoes squashing the melted slush in them, the thief crossed over to the desk. His victim appreciated and inwardly reviled the thoroughness of the search that then began. Each pigeon-hole was swiftly emptied of contents and its depth sounded by the desecrater's hand. The drawers followed, those on the left first, then on the right,

beginning with the top. . . . Mr. Sneckwith gripped the spindles and for his life clamped back a yell of protest. The man's hand had dived in and was bringing up the bag of money.

A start of satisfaction—warmth to the marrow and solid good cheer now assured—passed over the old thief's body, but as yet he did not open the sack. He paused only to heft it in his palm, then dropped it into the pocket of his coat and went on with his work. The remaining drawers, though, gave forth no more loot, and the shelves were the same. Ankle-deep in the rubbish he had strewn, he seemed to scowl thoughtfully at the meager promise of the rest of the house. The eyes darted at the doorway, and he started for the stairs.

But once more Mr. Sneckwith's access of terror had a respite. For Mr. Sneckwith, rising dizzily when the sloshing footfalls began, looked again when they ceased, and this time beheld his visitor over by the fire again, stooped over, shaking the contents of Wirt's money bag into his hand. The thief had decided to have a look at this much before working the upper part of the house. Yet the clink of metal on that alien palm was poignant valedictory in the money-lender's ears; and as for the bills, so far away, almost he could feel their velvety age between his own fingers. Something of the anguish of standing by a death-bed was in it for him. He could only stand and watch.

He saw the hateful interloper paw over coins and bills in the firelight. It was not much of a haul, but for the half-frozen old wolf there was soup and liquor and sleek content in the numerals conjured by the blaze out of the soiled heap. A fifty, a ten, a five would be fortune for such a wretch, Mr. Sneckwith reflected.

Why must he have it all? Was there no fair dealing left in the world?

But the ingrate spat contemptuously as he let the coins slide down the groove of his hand back into the sack. After them he stuffed the wadded bills, and at the last he noticed the sheet of paper that was not money, but Wirt's laboriously penned memorandum. He held an edge towards the flame, then changed his mind. Mr. Sneckwith shrewdly guessed that he imagined it might give a clue to other hidden bags, for the vagabond's eyes went scurrying like rats along the written lines as though there were a granary at the end of the passage. There was, of course, nothing at the end, and a low grumbling rattled in the man's throat.

He would now surely have burned the paper, but something from his hasty reading stayed his hand. He looked at it again, with a different interest, at first only curious, then by degrees more intent. He bent to one knee on the hearth, and the sodden derby and the white matted head strained farther into the light as he read.

Even when he had finished, he continued to stare at the paper, the glow of the fire rising and falling on the clenched jaw, the knotted brow. The eyes, fixed on the writing and seeing it not at all, were no longer ferret-like. They might have been seeing something very far away, yet seeing it very vividly, for after awhile they blinked and were watery, like a feeble old man's. Mr. Sneckwith wondered what had come over his visitor. Nothing could the money-lender divine of what was passing in the broken old criminal's mind, or in his memory; nothing of the visions that formed before the fixed and pain-shot eyes; visions of a boy, perhaps—himself; or worse, his own boy—at the exact moment

and place that boy had turned down the easier and pleasanter way.

Nothing Mr. Sneckwith divined, shivering on the stairs in his woolen socks and flannel night-shirt, although he was beginning to despise the burglar for not being a successful burglar. Work was work, success, success, and for a thief, on the job, to fall adreaming—well, he didn't wonder the fellow's shoes took in slush.

The dreaming was over, yet that past, that wraith of sorrow and regret, whatever it was, was for the thief a ghostly, guiding mentor now in the present. He looked up from the paper and slowly gazed about the room, as if in some way the two were associated in his strange thoughts. He had scowled at the bare furnishings before, because of their slim promise. But the scowl was gone. He was only thoughtful, yet tensely thoughtful. He looked again at the paper in his hand, and again at the bleak room, and this time he half nodded, as if the one confirmed the other. Even Mr. Sneckwith began partly to understand, and Mr. Sneckwith almost cackled over it in sly glee.

"If the fool don't think whoever lives here wrote that drivel! Thinks I wrote it. Yeh, see him checking up the furniture. Thinks I scrimped together that bag o' money for a piano-player. Thinks I'm the soft-head to beggar myself saving a widowed sister's boy from a good thing in a bucket shop. Sees how I had to slave to the bone to get it, too. Hee, hee, the lummo, he won't look for more. He won't come up here. Yeh, my skin's safe, anyway.

But Mr. Sneckwith's eyes slowly bulged bigger and bigger in their sockets. The burglar down there was doing a very strange thing. First, he took the bag of money out

of his pocket, and put Wirt's memorandum in his pocket, after which he laid the bag of money on the desk and turned towards the door to leave. His wet shoes went *shsish-shsosh*. He came as far as the hall, and the musty chill of the hall blanketed him, so that his teeth clicked. He paused then, and a furtive look whipped out of the tail of his eye back at the sack. He slunk back to it like a cur in the shadow of an alley, and once with his fingers on it greedily tore it open. He pulled out the first bills, and, more quietly now, smoothed them out on the desk one by one, counting them. Mr. Sneckwith knew that they were mostly one's and two's.

"For an overcoat, shoes, grub, drink o' whiskey, ticket to the next town," calculated Mr. Sneckwith.

The man smoothed out the last one of the wad. He was very, very quiet now. In fact he only looked down at them. At last he shook his white head, and, lifting about half the bills from the little pile, impatiently crumpled these into the sack.

"Putting back his overcoat," wheezed dumbfounded Mr. Sneckwith. Then:

"What, the shoes, too! For the love of . . . this scalawag has a conscience! There goes the grub. Eh—my soul—even the whiskey!"

The rest of the bills were in the sack, put there with a venomous thrust of the winter-bitten hand.

"But—" gasped Mr. Sneckwith, "he—he's making change!"

So it seemed. From the bottom of the bag the man's fingers brought up a silver coin. It was not a dollar. It was more the size of a quarter. Mr. Sneckwith sat flat on the step. "For the grub," he muttered.

The burglar pocketed the coin, and turned swiftly from the treasure, otherwise intact, on the desk. This time he did not pause. He went in

haste, scowling, mumbling. The slew-foot limp registered *shsish-shsosh* through the hall to the front door. He opened it noiselessly. Mr. Sneckwith heard the fall of sleet outside before it closed again; but closed it was, and the man was gone.

Mr. Sneckwith sat. He shivered, and that brought him to. He crept cautiously down the steps; then, from the bottommost, flung his weight against the door and shot the bolts home. An instant later he was slipping over the chaos of papers left by the burglar, and at his desk, the sack of money gripped between his ten fingers. But with that, with the money safe in his grasp, the galvanic instincts of the man were spent. He felt his heart beating, the heart that Wirt has questioned. He stared at the bag as if awakened, just so. Unconsciously his fingers relaxed, and the bag dropped back to the desk.

"What's the logic of it? The logic of it? The logic of it?" he moaned, demanded, like a cripple whose crutch of faith has been snatched away.

He stared long, long at the sack of money, but without touching it.

At last a smile—not a pleasant smile, but a sly, triumphant smirk—began to pick at his lips. Mr. Sneckwith had cause to rejoice. He saw now, saw plainly—anyone could see plainly—that it was not softening of the brain—certainly not softening of the heart—which kept him from touching the money. No, it was nothing like that. Anyone could see it was nothing like that. It was something as hard as granite, and Mr. Sneckwith was blessedly re-

lieved. For it was logic. Yeh, yeh—*logic!*

And never was logic more convincing, saving Mr. Sneckwith from the dread charge of a softened heart. Thus marched logic with its iron-shod tread: First, Mr. Sneckwith was not a thief, not an embezzler. Second, the money was no longer his money. Therefore he could not touch it! There, of course, that was why he could not touch it!

It had been his money, true. But also it had been stolen from him. It had passed out of his possession. He had lost it. But here it lay. The burglar had relented, had left it. True, again. But there was this important flaw about that. The burglar had not restored it to Mr. Sneckwith. He had left it for the writer of the sheet of paper. He had left it to buy a piano-player to keep a boy out of a good thing in a bucket-shop. No matter about the thief's imbecile whims as to that, there the money lay, appropriated to that purpose just the same. It was not Sneckwith's money any more. It was G. L. Wirt's.

Mr. Sneckwith tied a shipping tag around the neck of the sack, and on the tag wrote Wirt's name and address. Later he would find a way—and he did—to deposit the contents to Wirt's credit at the bank.

"Another logical thing," snapped Mr. Sneckwith, "and that's to report this robbery to the police. Yeh, yeh! Any citizen who's been robbed of a hundred and forty-four dollars and twenty cents owes that duty to the community. I'll give the scoundrel's description, too. Big, burly, strapping brute with a black cap and red hair. Yeh, yeh, didn't I see him just as distinct!"



# THE MAN WHO WAS BITTER



*Not to Mention the Girl Who Was Sweet. He Had a Good Reason for Being Bitter, and for a Time It Looked as Though the Girl Gave Him an Added Cause.*

By CLARENCE BUDDINGTON KELLAND

IF Miranda Guide had been a boy her present humor would have urged her to run away to sea, or to hunt gold, or to polish up father's old smooth-bore with a view to causing grievous mortality among the Indians of the plains. She was bored and angry. But, being no boy at all, but decidedly a girl, she entered her protest against the despotism of existence by crying privately until her beauty was reduced to a minimum, and ended by taking a long, solitary walk.

The road irritated her because it, too, was despotic. It commanded her to walk within its restricted narrowness, so she rebelled against it. Defiantly she turned off among the sand hills, great waves of lifeless yellow, which rose and fell for miles until their ultimate slope became the floor of the great lake.

Hot, tired, thirsty, her shoes full of sand, she slid down the steep side of a dune into a spot of reluctant green. Here she sat down, removed her shoe, and was knocking it against a sapling to clear it of discomforting grit, when a voice, harsh as though the sand from the surrounding hills had entered and rasped its owner's throat, demanded:

"What do you want here?"

Miranda covered her stockings

foot with her skirt. Then she turned apprehensively and saw, staring down at her with suspicion, a young man—a rough-looking, heavily-shod, ineligibly-hatted young man who could have been improved by the least skillful of barbers. He looked wicked, unrestrained, an elemental sort of person.

"Well?" he said. "Well?—What do you want here?"

"I want to—get the sand out of my shoes," said Miranda, frightened, but determined to conceal it.

"What made you come here? Who sent you? Did anybody send you to look for me?"

"I was taking a walk. Nobody sent me. Why should anybody send me?"

"Queer place to walk," he sneered.

She made no answer, but tugged on her shoe. He walked around before her, and under the protection of her hat-brim she looked up at him. He was a very young man. It was the beard that turned him into a hardened ruffian. She noted his eyes; they were not hard, bad eyes, but rather hurt boy's eyes—rebellious, bitter. Miranda drew a deep breath. She was no longer afraid.

"I thought I could be safe here," he said. "Who would come into this—" He waved his hand toward

the forbidding sand—"unless he was driven? Or spying—Well, go back and tell them I am here—"

"Tell whom?" Miranda felt a surge of pity for the young man—then came a thought adding apprehension to pity. "You haven't—gone and done something to—make men hunt you?"

"Not yet," he said.

"You—mean you are *planning* to do something?"

He did not answer.

"Are you very—very poor?"

"No."

"You do not have to—steal—for food?"

"I am not going to steal."

She was startled now—startled indeed. To Miranda crime took two forms—to steal and to kill.

"Do you hate someone?"

"Yes."

"He must have done something dreadful to make you want to—kill him."

He laughed shortly. "I'm not going to kill—either of them. But they deserve it." His face grew black.

"Don't do it—whatever it is," she said. "Being revengeful never helps. Uncle Zaanan says revenge is like smallpox. It leaves you all pitted up, and once started it's apt to spread—and hurt and hurt where you didn't intend it to."

The young man made no reply.

"Go away from here. Being alone—with these wicked sand dunes—is bad. Don't hide here and brood."

"I *must* stay here—you can tell them I'm here." There was a note of boyish pettishness in his voice.

"I ought to tell, oughtn't I?" She shook her head doubtfully. "But—I don't think I shall. . . . Good-bye."

Miranda brought home from her walk something more important than two shoes full of sand—an aching

curiosity and a refreshed interest in life. She wanted to talk to somebody about the young man of the sand hills—to ask some dependable person like Uncle Zaanan Frame, Justice of the Peace for Diversity township, what she ought to do. But Uncle Zaanan had a preternatural way of sliding past one's spoken word into the very heart of one's thought. It would not be safe to talk, so Miranda awaited events.

She waited forty-eight hours. Then, surreptitiously, she headed again for the sand hills.

She owned a clear idea why she had come again, of what she hoped to accomplish, but not the least notion of how to go about it. But she depended on inspiration or intuition.

"You—you haven't done what you—intend to do?" she asked.

"Not likely to for a month," he said complainingly, and bit his lip. His tongue had spoken without his permission.

A month! Miranda rejoiced. What might she not be able to accomplish with a month before her?

"Do you want to know my name?" she asked. "It is Miranda Guide."

She waited expectantly, but her strategy was faulty. He did not respond with his own name.

"I am going now," she said abruptly, and turned away, offended. She stopped, however, and said over her shoulder, "But I shall come again."

Miranda did come again as she promised—and yet again. There arrived at last a day when the young man—still nameless to her—came out of his oasis to meet her on the way—

Her mysterious comings and goings had thrown her sisters into a fever of curiosity. But she refused stubbornly to give an account of her excursions. When they became unpleasantly insistent it served but to

set the cement of her stubbornness. She felt she was upon a mission, was performing a high womanly duty—the saving of a man.

One sister, Ophelia, carried her campaign so far as to beg Zaanan Frame to discipline Miranda.

"She's up to something she's ashamed of, Uncle Zaanan," Ophelia said. "I think you ought to do something about it."

"Ashamed of," Zaanan repeated, glancing at Miranda's angry face. "Um— Ever notice, Ophelia, that folks mistrusts what they don't know all about? Eh? Good many folks mixes up the call of curiosity with the promptin' of duty."

"She goes tramping off alone—almost every day. Sometimes she stays a whole afternoon. If she isn't doing something she's ashamed of, why is she afraid to tell about it?"

"Maybe Mirandy calc'lated it wa'n't nobody's business but her'n. Be you ashamed of whatever 'tis you're up to, Mirandy?"

"No."

"Um— I hain't asked you no questions about it, have I?"

"No."

"Don't calc'late to nuther," he said. "Everybody's got to git into about so much trouble, and suffer about so much torment of one kind and another in this world—Can't be dodged. If you bite off more grief than you can chew, Mirandy, or if you fall into a deeper hole than you kin crawl out of alone, you might drop in on me."

Next morning Zaanan clambered rheumatically into his buggy to drive into Diversity. He called Miranda.

"Mirandy," said he, "it's a heap easier to *keep* out of trouble than to *git* out of it—G'dap, Tiffany. G'bye, Mirandy."

He had not disappeared from view before Miranda defiantly set out for the sand hills. She had not intended

going that day, was not expected, indeed her coming seemed to disconcert the bitter young man. She could not but notice his manner.

"You are not glad to see me," she said.

"I—never expected to see you again."

She stared at him, uncomprehending, then paled suddenly with fear as she understood.

"The month is over," she said.

"It is over."

"You haven't given it up—what you were going to do?"

"I couldn't give it up. It must be done—It must be done."

"And I—all my coming, my hoping, my praying has done—no good?"

She was silent, forcing back her tears.

"You should not have come," he said presently. "I did not want to say good-bye. To-morrow I should have been gone."

"You would have been—gone," she repeated after him dully.

"Good-bye," he said suddenly, his face granite-like but his voice a-quiver. He turned his back on her and strode away. She did not call after him, did not move to follow, but sank slowly, slowly to the ground and covered her face with her hands.

Presently she was aware that he had returned and was standing over her.

"It's not right, not fair," he said hoarsely. "I didn't mean to say it. I could have gone without seeing you. I had steeled myself to that resolution. But you came—Oh, you can't know what your coming again and again has meant to me—alone among these horrible mounds of sand. How I have hated them! This place is the earth stripped bare—stripped of lies, truth lying visible—and it is horrible. You came!

You had sympathy for me—I fought it down. I struggled with myself through long, terrible nights. You don't know how terrible the nights can be with the chill hate of the moonlight glaring on them—I could not fight it down; it was stronger than I—and I knew there could be happiness even in this world—happiness beyond my reach. I knew it would be happiness to be with you, to be with you constantly. For I loved you—loved you! That's the good your coming has done—" He stopped, breathing heavily.

Slowly Miranda lifted her face. Her lips were parted as she stared at him, unbelieving—yet believing.

"Love—" she said softly. "Love—" Then she smiled piteously and reached toward him with hungry arms. "Oh, my dear—my dear," she whispered.

The man stood stiffly, straining back as though resisting a force that dragged upon him. His young face worked with yearning, with the love that dwelt in him, with the effort to repress it. He was too young; stern years of contact with life had not hardened him to resist such a demand, and suddenly he crumpled, slipped to his knees and buried his face in Miranda's lap. So they remained, Miranda smoothing his hair and crooning to him as to a heart-broken child.

"It's all right now—It's all right now," she repeated again and again in her happiness and relief, until at last the words penetrated to his consciousness, and he lifted his head.

"All right!" he said bitterly. "No—no. Only harder to bear. I am ashamed. I came back—but how could I know—how could I dream—that you—you—that the look in your eyes was more than pity?"

"But you'll come away—with me. Out of this horrid sand, and the horrid thoughts, and plans, and bit-

terness. There is a different sort of world—I'll show it to you. It is sweet, and kind—and true. It will be different—so different—"

He stopped her. "There is a thing I must do. *Must* do!"

"No—no. That is past." Her fingers groped for him to restrain him.

"There is a thing I must do," he repeated dully.

"Not now—not after *this*."

He nodded. "This is the sort of thing life does to you—gives you a glimpse of the gladness that might be, and snatches it away—You must go, now. Quickly—go, and—pretend all this was nothing but a dream. It never happened. You never came into these sand hills, never met me—or cared. That is the way—the only way."

"Can *you* pretend so?"

"God help me—no!"

"Nor can I," she said, touching his arm with appealing fingers. "For me—*me*—you won't do this thing."

"I must." He took her hands and looked into her eyes. "Go, now, Miranda. It would not have been so bad—if I hadn't made you unhappy too—Good-bye."

He kissed her fiercely, released her suddenly and ran from her—ran as though he feared his resolution neared the point of breakage. In a moment he disappeared in the trough of a wave of sand—not to reappear.

Miranda stared after him, immovable. There was a seeming of unreality about the event; it seemed untrue, impossible that love should come, disclosing its beauties, only to whisk away wantonly as her fingers touched it. She waited—Suddenly she began to sob.

She dreaded to go home with her grief—grief that could not be hidden from the sharp eyes of her sis-



ters, so she lingered along the road, seeing neither hideousness of barren waste, nor loveliness of sunset, until dusk covered her as she slunk into the house and crept to her room.

Sleep did not come until dawn approached—She was awakened by voices under her window, by the creaking of buggy wheels cramped to permit Zaanan Frame to alight.

"Whoa, there, Tiffany," Zaanan blustered. His horse, famous through Diversity County, was named in honor of that greatest of all legal textbooks, Tiffany's Justices' Guide. "Stiddy, boy. Peter'll see you git a drink if he don't forgit it 'twixt here and the trough—Mornin', Ophelia. Mornin', Desdemony."

"What brought you so early, Uncle Zaanan?"

"Mornin' air, mornin' air. Good for hoss and man."

Miranda arose, dressed and crept downstairs. Zaanan was sitting on the porch with a glass of milk in one hand and a plate of cookies in the other.

"Mornin', Mirandy," He scowled at her briefly. "Looked in the glass this mornin'? Eh? Took note of your looks, Mirandy?"

"Yes, Uncle Zaanan."

"Sick last night, mebby?"

"No. But I—didn't sleep well."

"Um—Couldn't sleep. At your age! Um—There hain't nobody in earshot, Mirandy." She recognized an oblique invitation to confidence, but sorely as she yearned to share her burden, she dared not speak.

"Why are you here so early, Uncle Zaanan?" She was watching his face with pitiful eyes. "Did—did anything happen last night?"

Zaanan appeared not to hear. With profound interest he was watching the labors of a tiny red ant who aspired to engineer a crumb many times his own bulk across a crack in the flooring.

"Hain't nobody in earshot yet," he said presently.

She stood silent, trembling—waiting.

"There was a kidnagin' done last night, Mirandy," Zaanan said after a time. "I calc'late kidnagin' 's close to bein' the orneriest crime there is. Frightenin' a baby, and tradin' on the love of them that fetched it into the world!—Some catamount up and snatched away that leetle girl of Schuman's—and left a note demandin' money before she's be fetched back."

Miranda's hand went to her heart. "Who—who did it?" she gasped.

"Didn't leave no visitin' card—Crim'nals most generally don't. Done skillful, is my opinion—Hain't seen no strange men hangin' around, Mirandy? For a week or so or more?"

Miranda shook her head.

"Not on none of them long walks of your'n?"

"Have you been spyin' on me?" she said, turning on him fiercely. "Have you been following me?"

"Stiddy, there, Mirandy, stiddy. No, I hain't follered you, but I calc'late it might 'a' been done with profit—Mirandy, there hain't nobody in earshot yet."

Zaanan's voice, usually rough, brusque, was now gentle, tender, very kind — yearning. Miranda bowed her head on the railing and sobbed.

"Thinkin' of goin' for a ride, Mirandy? Eh? Buggy ride?"

She nodded her head, grateful for his thoughtfulness that would remove her from range of her sisters' eyes. Zaanan helped her into the buggy, clucked to Tiffany, and they ambled out of the gate.

"Always declared I shouldn't jump into the river without somebody hollered help," Zaanan observed.

"Oh, Uncle Zaanan! I'm afraid—I'm afraid."

"All comes of leetle girls gettin' their backs up and bein' stubborn—Might 'a' mentioned things to me. Eh? Hain't never interfered with your lawful pursuits? Eh?—Might 'a' mentioned about meetin' this here stranger."

"I—I was trying to stop him—It was nothing else. I knew he planned something—and I was sorry—for him."

"Um—Knowed he was plannin' somethin', eh? Seem like a crim'nal sort of feller?"

"No. Oh, no! He's just a poor, unfortunate boy—that the world has been cruel to—He said he *had* to do it."

"Um! *Had* to do it. Um! Argued with him, eh?—Did this here man make love to you, Mirandy?"

"Never—until yesterday. He tried to send me away—and it—it came out—against his will—I thought then I could save him—but he—he was stubborn. Even when he knew I—I cared for him—he said he *had* to do it—And now he's done it—he's lost."

Zaanan was peering at the whip-socket as if it were some new and vastly interesting device. "*Had* to do it," he repeated. "Um—Old or young, Mirandy?"

"A boy—just a boy."

"I hain't goin' to ask you who he is, nor yet where he's apt to be found—If you was to tell I calc'late I'd sort of lose int'rest in you—I'm plumb full of suspicionin's and surmises, Mirandy. They're—a-irritatin' me. Guess we better be gittin' back home."

Zaanan returned Miranda to the farm, then turned Tiffany westward. Once out of hearing, he began, as was his custom, discussing the problem with his horse.

"One thing, Tiffany, makes this

here case confusin'. The young man sayin' he *had* to do it. What for did he *have* to kidnap a baby? Eh?—Jest a boy, says Mirandy—I wonder if there hain't no way of discoverin' why doin' this thing was so all-fired necessary to him. Can't never tell when a human soul's goin' to get tangled up with the simplest thing, Tiffany. Not ever—What for would a boy kidnap a child plum in the face of fallin' in love and of bein' fell in love with?—Calc'late we'll head for the office, Tiffany."

In his office with that greatest of all books, Tiffany's Justices' Guide, under his hand, Zaanan was ready to attack his problem. It was not the problem of apprehending the kidnaper of the Schuman child—but the more subtle, more dangerous task, of disentangling Miranda Guide—of extricating her with girlhood and happiness unhurt.

Zaanan raised his head. "Hey, Dolf—Dolf Springer," he called.

Dolf shambled in; stood waiting.

"Drivin' east to-day, Dolf?"

"Calc'lated to," said Dolf, who had harbored no such intent before Zaanan spoke.

"If you was goin' to stop at the snoopin'est woman's nigh to the Schuman place, where's it be, Dolf? Eh?"

"Huntley's," said Dolf, after brief consideration.

"G'bye, Dolf."

"G'bye, Zaanan."

It was thus that Zaanan Frame directed his forces, by suggestion, by indirection—never by direct command.

The old justice waited stolidly for Dolf's return, listened to the garrulous flow of information, relative and irrelevant, which poured from him, and, with scant baggage, took the afternoon train for Detroit. Next morning he was back again in a mood that made it expedient for

the loafers of Diversity to whittle somewhere else than on Zaanan's steps.

"Know the way to the sheriff's office, Dolf? Calc'late you recall how to git there?"

"Go with my eyes shut," said Dolf.

"G'bye, Dolf," said Zaanan, and Springer trotted up the street to summon the sheriff, who, because he held his office by Zaanan's grace, was prompt to respond.

"Mornin', Sheriff," said Zaanan. "Caught the kidnaper? Eh? Caught him yet?"

"Hain't seen hide nor hair of him."

"Um—Looked in the sand hills, Sheriff?"

"Hadn't thought of it."

"Goin' to look in the sand hills, Sheriff?"

"Why—calc'late I might go projectin' around there some."

"Beginnin' where, Sheriff? Goin' in about a mile from Guide's farm was you?"

"Figgered on about that spot, Zaanan."

"Party goin' in from the lake shore, too? Eh?"

"Be a cute move, Zaanan."

"G'bye, Sheriff."

"G'bye, Zaanan."

As dusk began to settle over the, yellow waste of sand dunes a little cavalcade emerged onto the highway. Two of the men rode double; behind one sat a tiny, bedraggled girl; behind the second sat Miranda's young man, old-fashioned handcuffs gripping his wrists. Miranda, who had sat the day through with her eyes seeking to pierce the secret of the dunes, watched their approach gray-faced with agony. Zaanan had played her false!

At the farm the sheriff called his men to halt and water their animals in Peter Guide's trough. Miranda

tottered to the steps and stood there swaying, gripping a pillar for support, staring wide-eyed. The young man's eyes encountered hers, remained an instant, moved away without recognition. But as he turned his head he smiled bitterly. Miranda understood. It was an accusation.

She uttered a dull little cry, a stricken cry, and stumbled down the steps toward him.

"I didn't," she cried. "I didn't tell—I didn't tell."

"It doesn't matter," he said wearily. "It was the thing to expect."

"It's not true," she sobbed, striving to seize his manacled hands. "You must—you *must* believe me."

He drew his hands away gently, but made no answer, no answer of words. The bitter smile remained on his lips and in his eyes and Miranda knew he held her guilty.

Old Peter Guide, frightened, uncomprehending, drew Miranda into the house. She pushed him roughly from her and fled to her room and bolted the door.

There was consternation in the Guide household. Peter, vague, visionary, lovable, was beset by his daughters, demanding action of him in this crisis. But Peter was not the sort of man who takes action in a crisis, and because of this Zaanan Frame had long ago usurped his parental authority over his daughters. Now they turned to Zaanan.

"You must go to Uncle Zaanan," Ophelia commanded her father. "It was dreadful—It was unbearable—And that man wearing handcuffs!"

Miranda entered the room silently. Her sisters broke into clamor, but almost instantly were awed into silence by the pallor of her cheeks, the agony written on her face.

"Father," she said, her voice almost a whisper, "will you drive me into Diversity?—Now?"

Peter Guide hesitated.

"If you won't," Miranda said in the same dead tones, "I shall—walk."

During the long drive into Diversity neither of them spoke. Peter Guide dared not speak, sat stunned by the catastrophe that had overwhelmed one of his lambs; Miranda could not have spoken if she would. As they entered the village Peter asked timidly:

"Where—where do you want to go, Miranda?"

"To Uncle Zaanan's," she replied.

The old justice was not in his office, nor was he to be found. Peter suggested going home. Miranda refused, so they spent the night in the hotel, going early next morning to Zaanan's office again. The old man was at his desk.

"Mornin', Mirandy — Mornin', Peter," he said.

Miranda began to speak, to speak hot accusation, scarring words to this old man whom she hated for having betrayed her. Zaanan lifted his hand.

"Set," he said.

Miranda would not be stilled.

"Set," Zaanan repeated, raising his voice a trifle. "I'll tend to whatever you want after a while. Set."

Dolf Springer entered before Miranda could protest.

"Them Schumans is here," he said.

"Tell 'em to come in and set," said Zaanan, and went on imperturbably reading Tiffany's Justices' Guide.

The Schumans, dressed as for an event, came in, found chairs, and sat ill at ease, staring at Zaanan, staring at Miranda and her father. Zaanan read on.

The Schumans were not real Diversity folk, not native born to the community. Indeed, they were viewed rather in the light of summer visitors, for they occupied their farm

only during the more clement months of the year, living in Detroit when winds and snows held Diversity. They had but newly arrived—but a score of hours before the kidnaping of their child.

"Dolf," called Zaanan suddenly, "calc'late the Probate Judge is up yet?"

"Comin' down the street," said Dolf.

In a moment the Judge of Probate, fat, in his shirtsleeves and slippers, padded into the office.

"Howdy, Jedge," said Zaanan.

"Howdy, Zaanan," responded the Judge. He placed a large envelope on Zaanan's desk. "Them papers you wanted," he whispered.

Zaanan closed his book, but kept his finger in his place, and glowered under his shaggy brows at the Schumans. He wagged his thumb at them twice before he spoke.

"Mis' Schuman," said he, "about that leetle girl of your'n. I calc'late you was fond of her? Eh?"

"Like she was my own flesh and blood, Judge."

"Eh?—Own flesh and blood? Wa'n't she your child, Ma'am?"

"Adopted, Judge."

"Um—Relative's baby?"

"We got her out of an institution in Detroit."

"Glad to git a home, wasn't she? Eh? Mighty tickled to find a pa and ma?"

"It wasn't for her to be pleased or displeased," said Mrs. Schuman. "We were offering her our charity."

"I calc'late not," said Zaanan, nodding in agreement. "'Twan't any of her business, so to say. 'Course not— Send her to school? Eh? 'Tend to her eddication?"

"She went to school all that was needful—She's had to earn her keep."

"Quiet child? Obedient child?"



"She minded," said Mrs. Schuman grimly.

"Treated her like your own? Fond of her like she was your own flesh and blood? That's what you said? Eh?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Schuman.

"Then," said Zaanan, prodding the air in her direction with his thumb, "what in tunket was the reason for them welts on her back? Eh? What's the reason for them?—If you treated her like your own, what's the reason for her beggin' a slice of bread and butter off the neighbors? Eh? What's the reason?"

The woman was on her feet, pale with fury. "What business is it of yours? I can punish my lawful child when she needs it. It's none of your concern if I did whip her, or send her to bed without her supper—the little—"

"Set down!" Zaanan interrupted. He picked up a paper from the envelope the Probate Judge had given him. "Here's a paper you might calc'late to sign. It's a kind of resignation. It says you resign as parents of this leetle girl we've been a-speakin' of. Legal release by you of all claims onto the child. There's a pen stickin' in the sponge." Zaanan sat back and waited.

"We sha'n't do it," said Mrs. Schuman. "That child—"

"Mr. Probate Judge," said Zaanan, "has them facts been showed to the Prosecutor?"

"Showed 'em to him myself."

"State his opinion, did he?"

"Says he to me, 'Judge, this here evidence is more'n enough. It's enough for *two* convictions,' says he. 'It'll set that Schuman woman to canin' chair bottoms if complaint 's made,' he says."

Zaanan eyed Mrs. Schuman. "Go in' to sign, Ma'am?" he asked.

She held back a moment, but urged on by her husband, a weaker

soul, she affixed her signature. Her husband did the same. Zaanan regarded them a moment, then he said:

"It's sich as you that leetle souls is trusted to—Um. I calc'late law made by man hain't got no right to have the handlin' of you. That's why I let you go. Leetle folks is God's special friends—and He's got a way of carin' for 'em—eventually. I figger He'll have a way of carin' for folks that hurts 'em body and soul like you done to this child—G'bye, Mis' Schuman."

He turned from her, and from that instant his manner seemed to say she ceased to exist. It was a different Zaanan that spoke to Miranda Guide, not stern, now, not inexorable,—but gentle, fatherly.

"Mirandy, I'll git to you in a minute. Go into that there room." He pointed, then seemed to recall an envelope among his papers. "Here, Mirandy, might hand this here envelope to the gentleman waitin' there. I'll be in soon's I can git there."

Miranda opened the door into the next room, stepped within, and closed the door behind her. A man stood looking out on the street, his back toward her. He turned—it was her young man of the sand dunes— She shrank back against the door, her hand at her throat.

"I—didn't tell," she breathed. "You must believe—you must."

He made no reply, his face did not soften, his eyes remained bitterly fixed upon her. She took a step toward him, hands extended appealingly. The envelope dropped from them and fell to the floor. Automatically the young man picked it up, glanced at it, saw the name written on its face. It was his own. He opened it, eyes now averted from Miranda; read the legal document it contained. Again he read it eagerly, unbelievably, then let it flutter

through his fingers to the flowered carpet. He bent towards Miranda, his face working, his hands fumbling one with the other.

"You—you did this?" he asked, his voice a whisper of wonder and gladness. "You—and I believed you had set them on me. Oh, you wonder—"

She drew back from his eagerness. "No—I have done nothing—"

"It was through you—because of you. It's true—true. See! There is my name—and hers—there. My sister's, my little baby sister's."

Miranda groped for a reality to cling to, found none, looked to him appealingly.

"Don't you know?" he said. "Haven't you been told? And yet you bring this!—We were left—together, my little sister and I. They took us to an asylum—I tried to run away and take her—but they caught me—I did escape alone. I went away and worked and worked—to make a home for her. It was long—hard. People were unkind—cruel. When

I came back she was gone. The asylum had given her to a man and woman—they refused to give her up to me, even to let me see her—I watched—and saw them abuse her. . . . So I waited and planned—and then I stole her. That's why I was in the sand hills. That is the thing I had to do. That is why even the promise of your love could not hold me back."

Miranda was sobbing, her head against the door. "Why didn't you tell? Why didn't you tell me. Uncle Zaanan—"

"Has taken her from them," he said. "Look—there. My name, Robert Warder. The court has given her to me—and I'm not a—criminal. Not a kidnaper—Oh, Miranda, I didn't know the world was good. I didn't know the world was sweet—but it is sweet—I am happy, Miranda. Do you care? Because—because now I can tell you—without shame—how I love you—May I tell you, Miranda?"

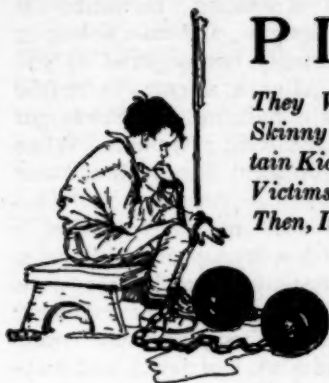
"I'm—listening, Robert," she said.



## RECIPE FOR SHORT STORY

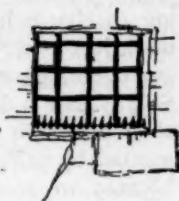
By JOB WRIGHT

A man,  
A girl,  
A gulf between;  
A bridge,  
A ring,  
All is serene.



# PIRATES

*They Were Known as Pokey and Skinny and Georgie, and, Like Captain Kidd and His Crew, They Were the Victims of Misdirected Energy. And Then, It Was a Day in Early Spring.*



By HENRY ROOD

MOTHER, she's got over the first terrible shock by now, and isn't expecting, any more, to see her only son's picture in the paper with his hair shaved close, his little arms handcuffed behind him, and a cannon-ball chained to each ankle clanking on the floor of his dark and gloomy cell while he paces to and forth meditating some new and desprited deed.

Gee! But we come near it, though—all three of us; I mean me and Pokey Pearson, and Skinny Reynolds. The tragicest part of the whole thing was Pokey's father, what's a judge himself, had to see his own beloved boy tried for high crimes and Miss de Meaners—whoever she is that they named the case after—by another judge what didn't know any of us fellers.

Skinny's father, which is minister of the biggest church in Ourtown, he held services on Sunday just as if nothing at all had happened; but I knew that way down inside of him angwish was knawing the core of his soul, so did Skinny. But he never lost his nerve, neither, no more'n his father; and as for my Dad, he was lovinger than ever, those dark and awful days.

Holy Snakes! It was some night-

mare, believe me! But I guess I better start in at the beginning and tell about it.

You see, us fellers just went for a walk that Saturday afternoon, which was a nice, warmish day in early Spring. Birds was twittering, and the trees turning a soft green, and dandylions and other ornaments of Nature's loving heart had took the place of arbewtus long since, which I hope my teacher will give me credit for thinking up. It's a great encouragement studying english to know that a feller's teacher reads over his work so carefully, and recognizes every painful effort to please her. So we just sorta wandered back of the schoolhouse, and acrost the field what slopes down to the brook where we spit into it a few times to see if the minnys was all right, which they was; then hopped over, stepping from stone to stone except where Skinny slipped off and went into the mud up over his left shoe. The other side, you know, there's the big hill covered with trees which we climbed until we got to the top of the ridge, and struck off tords the road beyond.

I don't know what we was talking of besides the new baseball rules and bird's eggs which we didn't see

any, and setting down a bit while Pokey said a lot of mysterious words over a woodchuck hole trying to charm him out which didn't work just as we all knew it wouldn't, and onethinganother like that. Once Skinny saw a baby rabbit and fired about a million stones after him, and wanted to fight both me and Pokey because we wouldn't take his word for it; and then me and Pokey, just the next second, really did see a chipmunk scabbling along a stone-wall, but that time Skinny he wouldn't believe us, neither, although he seen the chipmunk plain as day, and ran after it a dozen yards yelling like an Injun, and heaved a rock at it, too.

It was while we was walking along the road talking whether it 'd be more fun when we grew up to be pirates in the Pacific Ocean or fireman on a frait engine, that we come around a turn, and right ahead of us, only off to one side, was Castleton—a great, big house built way back before I was born by a man richern anybody else 'at ever lived in Ourtown, who got mad when they made him pay taxes he said he didn't owe, and moved away with his family and horses an servants. Ever since then Castleton's been what they call a deserted mansion, full of mysstery and spider webs which some of us fellers seen lots of times when we wasn't scared to go up close and look through a window.

"I'll bet a doenut," says Pokey, "that there's silver spoons, and watches layin' around loose in that house enough to make us rich for life."

I didn't say nothing just then because I was watchin' a bug try to balance himself on a leaf like he was an ackrobat to a circus; and all Skinny done was to spit scornful iike, and start to walk away.

"Where you goin'?" ast Pokey.

Skinny didn't dayne to reply, but kep' on a-walking forwards, in through the gate, and marched up to the big, empty house grand as you please. After a minnit, or maybe half of a minnit, me and Pokey got up, too, and went after him. When we all got there Skinny broke our silences.

"They ain't no silver spoons 'r gold watches laying around loose in *there*," he says, studyin' the walls and windows hard; "but I betcher they's silken hangin's, and Araby rugs, and plate and jewls, and maybe spices, worth any amount of money—besides ghosts."

"Ghosts!" says Pokey and me together, the same breath, and sort uv stepped back a foot, or a little more, p'raps.

"Yessir!" says Skinny, positive just like that. "Yessir! Spices, *an'* rugs, *an'*—GHOSTS!"

He shot this last word out so sudden at us that Pokey and me jumped right in our shoes. Then we rearlized how nice and warm the sun was shining, and heard somebody's dog bark a laugh over on the ridge, and felt better.

"Huh!" I says contempyus. "If they is any ghosts they wun't trouble nobody s'long 's it's bright daylight. *I ain't scared none.*"

"Me neither," says Pokey, pickin' up a stone and shyin' it at the front door.

"*Who said ye was!*" Skinny yells, just as sudden, and sorta mad. "I know *I ain't.*" And he commenced walkin' around the big house.

We wasn't saying anything more just that minnit, and all at once Skinny he stopped and pricked up his ears like. We stopped, too; it's funny how quick we stopped, for there wasn't anything to be scared of. But we did.

"What's the matter?" I ast.



"Thought I heard somethin' inside the house," Skinny answers, studyin' it all the harder.

"Yah! Yah!" Pokey sneers. "Likely, that is," he says, for sometimes Skinny gets his goat. "There ain't been nobody in that house for a dozen summers. What you heard, Skinny, was some of your ghosts." And he give a heartless, crewl laugh.

Just then we got around the corner of the house, to the side which is away from the road, and saw the sun shinin' full onto the big hot-house conservatory which is built up there. I judge there musta been at least ten or fifteen million panes of glass in it, maybe more; and every last one of 'em was blazing with light where the sun hit it. Why, on bright days the sun shines on that conservatory so you can see it glitter if you're standing on Flag Hill, way off about three mile acrost the valley.

For a couple or three breths I stood gazing, like it was a kind of glory let down here just for us fellers to have. Didn't blind me, neither, but sorta made my eyes wink. Way back at the end of my head I was wondering what fun it would be to catch all the sunlight there, and keep it inside the conservatory so it couldn't go away even when night come; and picked up a bit of quartz that happened to be layin' by my feet, and sent her a-sailin' through the air. It landed in the middle of a pane of glass, which smashed into a thousand pieces with the most beautiful *tinkle-tinkle!* I ever heard. And the next second two more rocks went sailin' through the air from Pokey an' Skinny.

"I hit my Pirate smack between the eyes!" yelled Pokey, pickin' up another rock.

"There goes mine!" yells Skinny as his stone crashes into a bright

spot of light. "Come on, fellers!" he whoops, grabbing a fistful of rocks and dancin' up tords the house. "Them bloodthirsty ruffyuns has got to be slawtered to th' last man! Here goes for their leader—that tall ruffyun with the long black beard and grinning teeth!"

*Zip!* went another rock through the air. *Tinklety—crash!* went the glass where it hit. Me and Pokey was firing fast as we could pick 'em up.

"Repel borders!" yells Pokey. "Here they come a-crowdin' over th' rail! Heave-ho, my hearties! Remember th' Flag! Valley Forge an' Abram Lincoln!"

"*Wow! Wow!*" I hollers as half of a brick left my strong right arm and smashed into three panes at onct.

"Another round from th' quick-firin' guns and Victry is Ours!" screams Skinny. "Death to the Dogs of Infidles!"

About sixteen rocks all struck at the same second, while yards and yards of glass jumbled up to smithereens with such a horrible, shivering noise that we stopped dead in our tracks. We took one look at the holes in that conservatory what gaped back at us; the stone I had in my right hand fell of itself to the ground; all the rest, in my left, sorter trickled out of my fingers and down into the grass around my feet. So did the other fellers'.

Skinny was the first to say anything.

"Beat it!" he says. And we did.

Skinny was for streakin' home acrost country and doublin' on our trail two or three times, so we'd get back to the village like we'd just come from a hike over tords Lake Waccabuc. He got this out between short, gasping breaths while he sort uv humped himself around the corner of the house. But Pokey wouldn't.

"No, sir!" this brave young hero disclaims. "What we want to do is to walk right out the gate onto the road, and go home cam and innercent. If we do *that*, nobody'd think we done crime. It's only dasstards," he says, "that sneak around terrified—and get caught."

This sounded sense, and I told Skinny so.

"Stands to reason," I went on, "that Pokey, being his father's a judge, and mixed up with crime six days a week, had oughta know what's what."

Skinny couldn't answer that, of course, so we loafed out the gate, closing it careful after us. I was dyin' to look over my shoulder at that house but Pokey says, "No; somebody might be comin' the other way and wonder at our suspicious curiosity. Walk right along," he says, "same as nothing had happened, and if anybody did come in sight begin playin' tag same as Injuns do walkin' in water to hide their tracks where they can't be seen."

By this time I felt better because that house with the conservatory full of gaping holes was out of sight; but all at once we heard wheels a comin' up back of us, and the next second three fellers named Pokey and Skinny and me was playin' tag for all we was worth. Then a strange man driving a strange horse trotted around the curve in a run-about, and grinned cheerful-like when he see us tearing after each other.

"Hullo, boys!" he calls out real friendly. "Want a lift? Get right in— I guess you can all find room."

He pulled up his horse and I near died from sudden scare. Then I took another breth and started to live again. Pokey was just saying:

"Thank you, sir," polite as pie; "Thank you, sir," he says. "We'll be glad to." And he hopped in back. I

climbed in next to him and we set there, our legs dangling over, and Skinny he got right up onto the seat besides the man.

"Any special place you'd like to go?" he says. "I'm just driving around to see the country, so it don't make any difference to me."

"Well," says Skinny, thinking hard; then a bright idea struck him. "We might go to the Post Office and see if there's anything for our folks."

That suited the man all right, and after that we had the nicest kind of a time. His name was Mr. Thomas, and he lives in the City; but this afternoon was such fine weather he just couldn't help taking a drive out into the country. And us fellers told him our names, too, and showed him lots of intrusting things while we was driving past 'em, like the brook where we get live bait to fish pickrel with, and the big tree struck by lightning Summer before last, and the ridge where we have a cave and play camping-out, and things like that. Then he let us out in front of the Post Office, and when supper time come we went back to our homes.

I was just finishin' off the last piece of cokenut cake Mother had on the table when the doorbell rang, and she went to see. In a minnit she spoke to Dad; and when he called me to go out there I could hardly get off'n the chair, I was took that weak in the knees. And on the stoop stood a big, tall man with a badge onto his coat.

"Georgie," said Dad, "this is a constable from Judge Babson over in Yorktown; and he has a warrant charging that you, among other boys, broke a lot of glass in somebody's house to-day. Is that true?"

"Ye-yes, sir."

Then the constable spoke up, sudden and sharp: "Who are the other boys that helped you? Quick now!"

I was that scared I didn't know

what to do; but Dad broke in suddener yet: "George, don't you answer a question this man asks you!" Then he turns to the constable, and looks him hard in the face, like I never saw Dad look at anybody before. "You'll get nothing out of my son!" he says, proud-like.

Ma had let out just one gasp; but now she held her head up higher'n ever, and commenced to smile that superior! And the constable he didn't say no more.

"Well, Georgie," Dad went on, "I guess we'll have to go with this officer. He's brought the papers all right. You wait here, my boy, while I get your cap."

I wanted to go for it, too, most awful; but Mother patted me on the arm and whispers for me not to be scared, and to tell the truth and everything would be all right; *especially* if I kep up my courage like my ancesters of hers that licked the British in the Revlutionary War and made this a free country. I tell you, she's got some grit, my Ma has! You ast Dad—he'll tell you, too.

So Dad and me went out tords the road, and what do you think? There stood a two-horse spring-wagon what the constable 'd brought, and in it was Pokey and Skinny and their fathers; and we all drove off in the night, passing through the village we loved so well, and every turn of the wheels wondering if our young eyes ever again would beholed those familiar scenes.

When we was passing the school-house and thought of the baseball match that was to be played there Wennsday, I could feel Pokey shake with dispare, for he's the greatest little shortstop anywheres around. Soon the wagon rolled by the church where Skinny's father is minister of, and all well knew our young companion in sorrow was inwardly beemoaning the times he'd kicked like a

steer because being the minister's son he had to go to church twice every Sunday besides Sunday School in the afternoon, and like as not get worked in for prayer-meeting Thursday evening which meant him staying in the house that afternoon getting his lessons done for Friday and no wonder he was going to be a Artic Explorer when he grew up.

As for me, when we turned the corner where Dad's store is, I could 'a' cried rememberin' how mean I used to think it was in him to make me run errends half of every Saturday, even if I did get Twenty-five cents for it. As the building faded from our sight and the spring-wagon rolled off in gloomy darkness tords Yorktown, I'd a give anything in this world to be able to work in that beautiful, friendly store day *and* night, *the rest of my life.*

Did you ever fall out of a balloon in Winter time and drop down onto the ice in the middle of Lake Michigan, and crash through it, and get sucked under the edge a thousand miles from any chance of being rescued? If so, you know how me and Pokey and Skinny felt that night when we got to Judge Babson's court over to Yorktown. Afterwards I looked in the glass and was s'prised to find my hair hadn't turned white. Yes, us fellers got home late that same Saturday night, because Judge Babson he poseponed our trials. At least we all thought so until we learned that what he'd poseponed was sentencing us. You see, everything was mixed up. First we was told that we'd been arrested onto a warrant swore at by the strange man what give us a ride in his run-about; him being real estate agent for the Castleton house, and inside it when us fellers was heaving rocks at the conserrvatory. So Skinny was right, after all; he *did* hear somebody

movin' around, and they wasn't ghosts neither.

Judge Babson ast us if we knew what a oath was, and his clerk swore us onto a Bible. Then the judge wanted to know if we really had busted the glass; and we said, Yes, which made him look very grave while he told our Dads to be responsible for us and bring us back to his court Monday morning, ten o'clock. After which we went home.

As usuel, the news went around like wildfire does they say, though me and Pokey and Skinny never see it because I ast 'em apurpose; and before daylight, so we was told afterwards, everybody in our town was talking it over; and by breakfast half the folks thought us fellers had been arrested for murder; but the other half said, "No, it was highway robbery with intent to commit are son." *Anyhow*, it was tough. Soon's I swallowed a little serial I went up to the attic and set down in the corner furthest from the street, and imagined what it'd be like to stay in a prison three or four years, where I couldn't have none of Mother's strawberry shortcake Summers, or apple turnovers, Wintertimes. I decided to get used to it right away by counting a thousand seconds out loud for each year; but before I got beyond two hundred, Mother she called up was I about ready for church? And then the bell begun to ring, and I remembered it was Sunday!

Of course I didn't want to go, but had to; and what do you think? Instead uv standing off with scornful wagging their heads, like I supposed they would, lots of the fellers come right up and walked alongside, and made me tell 'em about every last thing that was said and done, and seemed proud to be with me. And as we got nearer the church, there comes Pokey up the street, and *he* had about a dozen fellers taggin'

along, and hangin' on every word *he* spoke; and they was a line of other fellers yet, waitin' in front of the parsonage for Skinny to come out. And later on, when church was over, the girls was even more so. Why girls so big they never had noticed us no moren scum off the earth, they spoke and smiled just like we was years and years older and had commenced shaving our faces. It was the curosest thing I ever knew. Instead uv treatin' us like adders and vipers, those big girls seemed to think we was heroes! But Skinny says such is life and let it go at that; which we did.

There ain't no use my tryin' to tell all that happened. Of course I had to stay home Sunday afternoon, and Dad was with me most of the time except when he went down street and spent quite a spell with Pokey's father, they not disturbing Skinny's because a minister's got enough to think about Sunday without being bothered on account of his boy getting sent to prison Monday morning. I knew we was on the way to prison, just about sundown, when Slat's Potter sneaked up to the back fence and whissled for me quiet-like. I went down there just casual—sorta careless, you know—and he said Judge Babson's young lady daughter'd been in our town ever since noon, calling on lots of people and askin' questions about me and Pokey and Skinny.

Dad he come home for early supper, and before very long I went to bed. He set up with Mother all hours, talkin' *and* talkin'; and way about the middle of the night I guess it was, I waked up just enough to hear her voice awful trembly, and all choked up with sobs that made her shake somethin' terrible. That's when she was grabbed by the hisster-ick; but Dad was so cam and soothing I knew it couldn't be as bad as all that. And next thing, she was



kissing me awake for breakfast; and before we could rearlize it, us fellers and our dads was back there to Yorktown, and court was open.

After talkin' awhile to Mr. Thomas and his lawyer, Judge Babson looked down at us grave and sorry-like, and said he wanted to see us alone in his Chambers. Then he walked very straight and dignified out of court, and another man hustled us fellers after the Judge into a big room lined all up and down the walls with rows and rows of books and a desk in the middle. We stood sorta faint like, by the door that was shut after us, until the Judge told us to sit down, which we did, on three chairs acrost from his desk and near a big window. He looked just as serious as before; but somehow I wasn't near so scared of him in there.

"Boys," he said, "you have been found guilty of destroying property belonging to others, which you had no right to touch."

"Yessir," Pokey wispers; but the Judge didn't notice him, and went right on. He used some big words I had to get teacher to show me how to spell afterwards; but I'll not forget a single thing he said, not to my dyin' day. He looked at us, very quiet and steady; and I could feel those deep, gray eyes of his down inside of me, way to my backbone. Finally he spoke again:

"I have had special inquiry made regarding you three boys. I do not believe you are bad boys at heart; that you lie, or steal, or disobey your parents, or that you act cruelly toward smaller children or helpless animals. And yet punished you must be, for it is my sworn duty to administer the law.

"Now I want one of you three lads to tell me all about it—just why you went to Castleton, and how you happened to throw stones at the glass."

Skinny and Pokey was both lookin' at me, and both says in the same breath, "You tell him." So I got up, tryin' to keep from twisting my cap, and begun:

"It was this way, sir. We just sorta wandered acrost country and got to the big house, and when we saw the sun shining so bright on all that glass, it looked like an army with swords and bayonets, or a pirate crew with glittering cutlasses ready to dash onto us. I fired the first stone, and one of us fellers hollered, 'Have at 'em, my Hearties!' or somethin' like that, and then the air was full of rocks and smashing glass, and we was dancing around, yellin' like anything—tryin' to repel borders that was crowding over the rail, to jump for our throats and stab us through!"

"Did you boys think, for the moment, that you actually saw pirates with shimmering cutlasses bearing down upon you?"

"No, sir!" I replies. "We didn't *think* so—we really *saw* 'em, and heard 'em yell, too, and we knew it was life or death! So we grabbed all the rocks we c'd lay our hands on, and let 'em fly—until that awful big crash of glass waked us up; and then we saw what had happened."

"Waked you up?" says the Judge, nodding slowly, looking first at me, then at Pokey, then at Skinny. "I see; I see. . . And afterwards?"

"That's all, sir."

He got up and walked to the window near where we was sitting, and looked out at the green leaves all ripplin' with sunshine that come straight out of that soft, blue sky. He stood there what seemed a year; then he pressed a button on the desk, and somebody held the door open while he walked out, still very dignified, and up onto the platform where he sets in court. Me and Pokey and

Skinny was husteled out there again, while everybody in the crowded room craned their necks and hunched around tryin' to see us, and a little wave of awe sorta shivered through the air. I'll never forget a word of what he said this time, either.

"Prisoners at the bar," the Judge began—and we all stood right up in front of him: "You have been found guilty of the wrongful acts with which you are charged. I have satisfied myself that your motives were not those of wantonly destroying property belonging to others; yet, regardless of motives, such property has been destroyed by you. Therefore, you are sentenced as follows: That you or your parents repair all damage done to the glass, such expense as well as costs of this action being divided equally among the three of you; and that you render suitable apology to Mr. Thomas, agent for the owner of the estate known as Castleton. Until sentence is fulfilled, you are each and severally

remanded to the care of your father. No bonds required."

"Don't we have to go to jail?" I whispers to Dad; and when he said, "No," I let go his hand and found I'd held onto it so hard my fingers was all cramped up.

Well, there's not much more to tell about. My Dad and Skinny Reynolds' father, and Pokey's, they paid the bill—a little more'n thirty dollars, it was; half for the broken glass, and half for the cost of setting in court. And now us fellers are workin', fifteen cents a hour, to pay our Dads back—every afternoon, soon's school lets out till suppertime, and I guess we won't be through all Summer.

When we heard how much the bill was, Skinny he blame near cust.

"I know what I'm goin' to do when I grow up," he says. "I'm goin' to be a judge an' get rich. . . . Fifteen dollars for just *settin'* on a case. . . . Gosh! Think what he c'd make if he stirred around, some!"

## CANOEING IN THE HOME

VINCENT ASTOR was entertaining an acquaintance at his Rhinebeck estate, Ferncliff, not long ago, and after dinner young Astor arose from the table with his guest and remarked that as he needed a little exercise he thought he would go canoeing.

"Canoeing?" repeated his guest, looking out into the dusk upon the snowy landscape, "you wouldn't cut a hole in the ice for that, would you? You're not going down on the Hudson, are you?"

Young Astor laughed and took his friend out to his great swimming pool, a duplicate of an ancient Roman bath, but much larger. It is said to be the largest private swimming-pool known.

In one corner of the pool floated a canoe, one of those genuine Oldtown, Maine, birch-bark affairs. Removing his coat, Mr. Astor climbed in and was soon spinning his canoe about and driving it up and down the length of the pool.

"It is the best after-dinner exercise I know," he explained.

He had it placed in the pool to use in improving his paddling strokes in winter, and also for developing a graceful and easy method of falling out and climbing back again. Then he discovered that it was an excellent thing to paddle about for ten or fifteen minutes after a hearty dinner, and when at Ferncliff he seldom fails to take advantage of the opportunity.

# THE IDEAL AMERICAN CITY

It Is by No Means an Utopian Dream, for Its Component Parts Are Already a Reality—Civic Problems That Have Been Ably Met by American Cities

By AMOS STOTE

WHY are we, the mindful people of the United States, losing our ancient habit of complaint against home-town politics? Why is an adventure with civic virtue, a plunge into municipal niceness, becoming a matter of inspiring repetition? The answer is to be found in the introduction of good business methods and good women into politics—and the active interest of the private citizen.

The row has been a long one and the hoeing hard, for much political decay has been required before the ground of our demands produced a crop of determination; but to-day, as never before, are we feeling the fertilizing influence. The ideal American city is not yet within the limits of any one municipal corporation; but the component parts are already in the country, in some instances in duplication, and though time may be necessary to accomplish the assembling the task is by no means impossible.

Of the various elements called to the making of an ideal city, and their number exceeds legion, a practical grouping of the chief divisions may be indicated as follows:

Government, or executive control, which is head of all in that it directs and records all; and yet is but one branch of municipal operation in that it represents the inner workings.

Traffic, or the outer workings of the city, the only branch of govern-

ment in action with which practically all citizens come into daily contact.

Highways, or the channels of traffic, the arteries of the city through which flow its life. The physical side of the city of constant service to all its people.

Architecture, or the structural development, planning, and composition of the city.

Betterments, or the results of the newer movement in civic affairs, brought about by the citizen's increasing realization of his indebtedness to his city—and especially the work women have done.

The reader may take exception to this unusual manner of classifying municipal activities, but the reason for so doing is easily explained. Should an attempt be made to deal with the subject by treating each of the recognized departments individually the spirit of larger control would be lost in a mass of small details. Under the division termed *government* rests the direction and development of those routine branches of the service of which the police, fire and water departments are the most important. These form the mechanics of city building, the absolute essentials to bare production of even the roughest type of municipal structure. Admitting these departments to be of such vital importance they represent the body of the city, we must still have it endowed with

a soul of finer perceptions before it is possible to achieve the ideal.

To the reasonable question as to why a city with the perfected form of government should not of necessity be ideal in all its operations there is a two-fold answer: In the first place no such government has been long enough in operation to make its influence felt, or at any rate to produce actual results, throughout all the ramifications of civic control. In the second place, and this, in a sense, is the whole answer, an ideal government, as a working body, can only be such when it receives citizen co-operation. That such co-operation has been necessary to the introduction of good government goes without argument, but in such cases the citizen movement is so specialized it is forced to concentrate on the one objective point. The desire of a community laboring under a corrupt political machine is to dethrone the bosses, to clean house and install new furniture. Matters relating to ways and means of operation belong to the officials put in for the purpose.

Such was the case with Dayton, Ohio, the city selected as our best example of executive control. Such might even be said of all the two hundred and more communities in which the commission form of government has been put in operation. Possibly in another twenty-five years this type of management may be able to produce an ideal city in every respect. In the meantime we must look to a variety of communities to complete our ideal, cities in which circumstances or necessity has developed some one feature to a degree of excellence.

The choice of Dayton for description is quickly explained. The Ohio town lays no claim to being first, last, largest or smallest of the cities adopting a commission form of government. In fact, Dayton makes no

claim; but its record proves it to have been one of the worst before the coming of the commissioners—and quite certainly the best after they and the city manager got down to work. Its history during the old, unregenerate days is just a smutty reproduction of that of many another city where great industrial development has projected a complex growth offering constant opportunity for political graft.

Some people think Dayton's flood caused the revolt of the righteous, but in reality the good citizens had been at work in the interests of reform for months before that tragedy. The first step was taken when the local Chamber of Commerce asked five business men to find a way out. Because the five were real business men their investigations led toward a commission form of government and a city manager.

They looked at the matter as they would at a commercial project. Let the commissioners occupy in the affairs of the city a like place to that filled by directors in a private corporation; but give the doing, the carrying out and improving of the operations involved in the everyday work of the city, to a manager. By making the commissioners responsible to the citizens and the manager responsible to the commissioners they saw an insurance of prompt action and obligation definitely placed. The plan was approved by those who were promoting the work.

Then the fight started. The political bosses who straddled the city's neck endeavored to close every avenue by which the business men could push their plan; but they could not prevent the latter talking, and they talked to such good purpose, on the endless chain plan, asking each person to whom they outlined the project to carry the word to others, that it was not long before the whole



town knew the matter by heart. Then the people were put to the test through the sending out of pledge cards, committing those who signed to the support of a commission-city manager form of government.

The pledge work started before the flood, Dayton's flood, and was continued with as little delay as the water allowed. In May of 1913, when the streets were hardly dry, mind you, and men were still bailing out their cellars, Dayton declared for a city manager by selecting fifteen men, not politicians, but men, to draw up a new charter. Though each one's business was crying aloud for twenty-five hours a day of reorganization, in less than a month the drafting of the new charter had been completed. As a trifling side issue Dayton raised two million dollars in one week to be used in erecting flood defenses.

After the drafting of the charter came the election of five commissioners, whose first task was the securing of a city manager, a real "boss" by right of ability, the old man of the business of operating a city.

From this time on it was up to the city manager. The new charter gave him basic principles and the five commissioners rehearsed the city's desires. The hiring of heads of departments, and heads for any work at all, rests with the manager. Residence, race and religion are not considered; the whole question is one of delivery, not of votes, but of good works. And all the while, behind the manager, are the commissioners, ready to advise, support, correct—and listen to reports of results; while locked in the safe, never menacing yet never forgotten, is the certificate of progress insurance, the power of recall.

The beauty of the whole scheme lies in the fact that no opportunity

exists whereby blame may be successfully evaded or grounded in confusion. Both criticism and compliment reach the manager; his laurels may not be usurped, his neglect may not be concealed.

Some of the greatest net results the new Dayton has achieved are to be found in its modern systems for making purchases of any kind, expenditures of every kind, checking of labor, inspection of work and reports of results. One of the duties of the commissioners is the appointment of committees selected for their expert ability to confer with the city manager on specific problems.

Dayton has already adopted for the service of its less prosperous citizens those fine methods employed by our best industrial corporations. It has a department of free legal aid, operates an employment bureau and loan office, in addition to various other helps for the more or less helpless. Though of such recent installation much of this new civic machinery has already proven a good investment. An average reduction of twenty-five per cent. has been effected in the purchase of supplies, with an actual added saving in that the goods have been of better quality.

A new and adequate water supply, of such vital importance to a growing city, has been secured. The town has been physically cleaned until the filthy streets of former days are known no more. Pavements are regularly washed, rubbish receptacles provided where needed, the collection of ashes and other waste matter, which before the reformation had been neglected for twelve long months, resumed.

After graft and unskilled management the greatest curse common to all degrees of government is red tape. Again has Dayton excelled; and offers an interesting instance of simpli-

fied control through giving its physicians the use of the police-telegraph for the reporting of cases, thus saving time, money, the spread of contagion, and sometimes life. The change came easily. The city manager is accessible and wants suggestions. When this matter was presented he saw its value and promptly authorized its adoption—no ordinance, no vote, no aldermanic quibble—just the authority of one expert.

Dayton's fire and police departments were so demoralized at the time of the coming of the city manager that he decided to personally undertake their direction. The result is a hundred per cent. increase in efficiency. Each day at four o'clock all the heads of the departments meet with the manager to present, devise and discuss, that co-operation may be complete.

#### FIVE MILLION PEDESTRIAN POWER

It has been the habit of the world to marvel at London's control of traffic. Because it stands first in population, because many of its streets are narrow, winding, meeting at all sorts of angles, because several streets may flow toward one center and force much of their combined burden on a single thoroughfare—because it has evolved practical travel from physical chaos—we think of London as standing alone.

If we will take a flier in patriotic justice and offer for comparison our own big city, the second international metropolis, we will find that, problem for problem, New York presents as many difficulties in its streets as have ever assailed London.

London is built low and flattened out. New York is built high and condensed. Where London will house a thousand, below and above a like space New York will house ten thousand, twenty thousand. London

has spread where it would; New York has spread where it could—and mostly it can't.

That great commercial center known as the City, in London, receives its workers each day from every direction and fractions thereof. By way of contrast New York is built like a hollow wedge which each morning is assaulted by some millions of humans who are driven into it for eight bursting hours, after which the great master wedge seems to contract and hurl back its too-great burden. London can't think such transient congestion as New York experiences six times a week below Forty-Second Street.

Where else in the world but New York are to be seen batteries of ten and twenty office building elevators, packed to bulging four times a day, striving to meet the traffic demands to and from the streets? Where else so many restaurants to the square foot, packed to confusion during rush hours, displaying signs begging their patrons to spare them at this time.

New York is incurably deformed and chronologically congested, so that no matter how many operations are performed in the construction of tunnels and bridges they can only give it enough relief to prevent the intolerable. And yet New York holds a record for safety and certainty in traffic management! Necessity as exposed by New York's traffic has developed another science, a vital profession — civic transportation. The harmony, the poetry, the rhythm of motion, when applied to this city's five million pedestrian power, leaves the realm of lyric verse and becomes an element in higher mathematics.

Eight years ago Thomas A. Edison said to me that if all the horse-drawn vehicles then in use in New York could be transformed into motor cars overnight the space saved

and the speed and load gained would so relieve traffic as to make Manhattan Island resemble "The Deserted Village." We now know the change would have been wonderful, but very transient. Most of us remember those assertions made during the construction of the original subway to the effect that such a travel artery would draw all the life from parallel surface and elevated lines. Later prophecies concerning the Hudson Tubes sounded the death knell of the ferries. To-day we realize that without more subways, tubes, bridges, and the eventual elimination of the horse, all the traffic doctors of the world will not be able to save New York.

Our reasonable hope is that the progress of the past indicates the advance to be made in the future. It is but a little more than eleven years since the system of traffic policemen was initiated. To-day we could not do business without them. Prior to their coming, and at a time when the number of vehicles reached less than half the present enrollment, it was not unusual to see a tangle of teams blocking travel in all directions for from ten to twenty minutes or half an hour. Now the most awkward delay will last no longer than two or three minutes.

Various complaints have been lodged against New York's use of the block system—the stopping, alternately, of the lines of traffic at important crossings—because of the frequent necessity for halts. As tests prove the cost of safety and order under this method averages but thirty-seven seconds during the busiest hours in the busiest part of Fifth Avenue, there seems small room for criticism. A little more than half a minute per stop is not exorbitant when one considers the shape of Manhattan, with east and west and south cut off so far as

drives from the commercial center are concerned; with business built to the water line on three sides, and the only passageway one long, northern lane.

The city is gradually installing isles of safety in busy sections where the width of the streets permit these middle-of-the-road breathing spots. At very wide crossings resulting from the diagonal intersections of streets roped off areas are established to serve a triple purpose: Keeping traffic within its channels, providing protection for the pedestrian, and stands for cabs. As the ropes surrounding these spaces are run through movable posts they are changed about or taken away whenever conditions require.

New York may be guilty of many indiscretions, the dark shadows in its political history may be little short of ghastly, yet in the matter of transportation it has solved finely, economically and safely a most perplexing problem. Its traffic regulations issued to police and drivers are so simple and explicit, its placards for public stables, garages and cab stands so clear, they have come to be considered standardized rules of the road.

Brooklyn Bridge, because of the awful strain of travel put upon it, has long borne an unenviable reputation. Yet to-day it is a remarkable example of chaos conquered. For three years a traffic expert lived on the bridge and fought with seemingly hopeless conditions. His one chance of salvation lay in the fact that most of the travel moved toward Manhattan in the morning and toward Brooklyn in the afternoon, so that it was not so much a matter of conflicting lines as of keeping one line in constant motion.

To facilitate service on the elevated roads signals were evolved which inform the dispatcher as to

which one of nine lines each approaching train belongs. This gives an opportunity to prepare switches and avoid the necessity of delaying trains in the act of pulling up to platforms. An illuminated map of the bridge was also provided the dispatcher, so that he may know at all times the position of every train on the structure. Yet another important time and safety innovation are the double lines of rails on platforms, so arranged that patrons are forced to maintain an orderly file in entering the cars. By these and various other means the expert has increased the service on the elevated roads from fifty to sixty, and even sixty-five, trains per hour during the height of the rush period.

The remedy for the surface car confusion was as simple as it was effective. The principle trouble arose through frequent disablement. As the fault lay with the companies, and one company in particular, in sending out cars in bad condition, they were notified that repair departments must at once be placed on a better working basis. The result of this warning was an immediate improvement in service and before long dispatching jumped from two hundred to three hundred cars per hour.

The most difficult problem of the bridge concerned wagon blockades. Congestion was almost constant, with the result that confusion and delays and entanglements of all sorts made the matter appear hopeless. To limit the number of vehicles allowed on the bridge would at once raise a storm of protest and would be reversing the aim of the expert. After days of study this travel engineer thought he had hit on the root of the evil. Confusion seemed to center around wagons heavily laden and drawn by horses. For some time he made it a business to check up all accidents. A comparison of these

biographies of trouble revealed the fact that the vast majority of delays came from the stalling of over-loaded horse-drawn wagons.

There was but one remedy for this—the refusal to allow any vehicle so burdened to enter the bridge. To make sure that offenders would in the future either avoid the structure or reduce their loads the traffic expert made it a practice to promptly telephone employers and explain the situation. Almost without exception the information was appreciated but the expert told that money had been given the driver with which to pay for passage on a ferry-boat, so the horses might rest and have their haul shortened. By using the bridge the drivers were able to save a few cents for their private purse.

Of late years the navigation problems of New York have become so complex that every issue involves fresh analysis before proper action may be taken. As the city has grown taller, to provide for the coming of greater numbers into the business districts, even the matter of sidewalks, of actual foot space for the pedestrian, has become acute. Tests have proven the "impossible" is reached when ten persons per foot width pass any one point per minute. Where congestion is particularly noticeable men are stationed to count the passersby. For a time it was all the city experts could do to keep up with the "impossible" but during recent years they have stolen a march on congestion and sidewalks are being widened where but six persons per minute per foot width pass a given point.

Until one has watched the process whereby sidewalk width is created in New York the task might seem comparatively simple; but the problem changes where there may be no encroachment on the roadway—too often the road takes toll of the walk.



So it comes about that when the city reeds more foot space it operates on buildings, hewing away the steel and marble and granite of impressive entrances, removing anything that tends to crowd the citizen from the walk.

As to surface cars, the common trolleys, we find them among the greatest offenders. New York traffic engineers tell us the stopping of a trolley car on the lower end of the islands adds to the cost of city deliveries, and the stopping of thousands of them is no small item. Therefore they rejoice to see the new one-step tram, with its broad entrance, and are proportionately glad to witness the departure of the old, time-consuming two- and three-step cars.

Every new subway tunnel results in a net saving in street traffic. It would now be impossible to control New York traffic without the subway, both from the standpoint of transportation and the relief it brings the streets. The present subway often transports a million people a day and has a record of over three hundred million a year. Yet this is not enough, not half enough, and the new underground roads are in sore demand. There are some seven thousand men at work on one and another of the city's below-surface travel ways; and all the men and women employed underground exceed thirty thousand. Some two million people spend part of each working day with their heads lower than the pavement, bowing to the will of a deformed island.

When the new subway is in operation the city will be able to boast of six hundred miles of rapid transit railways, capable of transporting three billion passengers in a year—and of offering a five-cent ride of twenty-six miles.

Add to these means of travel tens

of thousands of private automobiles and carriages and three thousand taxicabs, which travel nearly a million miles a year at a cost to the public of six million dollars. If you can conceive the immensity of such service you will stand in awe of New York's traffic problems, and respect the safety of its streets.

#### THE BOULEVARD CITY OF AMERICA

So much for New York's rule of the road. Now suppose we turn to Kansas City, the boulevard city of America, for an understanding of what a municipality may do in the way of producing *good* roads. If the result of its efforts ended in beauty alone the cost and labor would justify the end; but Kansas City is acquiring the habit of adequate highways, it is laying by against the day of greater congestion. When it set about the gaining of relief from its mass of raw, scarred hills it decided to combine beauty with utility and convert an overgrown town into a finished city. It really went beyond that—it produced a great display advertisement for itself; while the city displays its boulevards the boulevards show off the city to the best advantage.

We might mention in passing that Kansas City has good rail, as well as wagon roads. When the new union depot is completed it will be the gateway to more railways than any other station in the world—thirty-two separate lines. We might also mention in passing that Kansas City has a good heart, all the municipal way from protecting the poor to acknowledging that sins of ignorance, youth and privation are faults of society expressed through the wrong-doer. It shows the handiwork of good men and women who use their voice in civic matters. It has a Board of Public Welfare, a non-political, mu-

nicipal body, supported by city funds and working to wipe out every influence that makes for poverty and crime. It supervises the forty-three charitable and penal institutions within the city and keys them up to efficiency. It is actively interested in everything in Grub-less Street, from child-birth to suicide and from prostitution to the collection of debts. It operates a rock quarry where men are given work while its free employment department combs the city for permanent jobs. It has a free legal-aid bureau prepared to fight for those who can't fight for themselves.

This is a long way from boulevards and parks, but it was the route taken by Kansas City, for in the honest pride of its new dress it saw the sham and felt the shame of its display of vice and misery. Our present interest, however, is concerned with the surface side of Kansas City, and especially with its contribution to the ideal of a wonderful version of the open road. Back in '96 this part of the southwestern prairies set about the conquest of the ugly, the ugly that had been ever with it and on all sides. Hardly could a settlement have found greater disfigurement on all the face of nature. Its barren cliffs and muddy hollows were not the hills of Jerusalem; they lacked safety, dignity and romance—they were more fit for goats than for the dwellings of men and women.

That was years ago, before a group of nature's beauty doctors started operations on the countenance of this Missouri municipality. Since then ragged bluffs have been made to take on the likeness of hanging gardens, steep paths have been engineered into charming, winding drives and a great steel and concrete overhead roadway has been constructed to connect the two Kansas Cities, so

that both motorist and pedestrian may avoid the miles of manufacturing district bordering the State line and known as the "Bottoms."

The advent of the automobile undoubtedly had much to do with the construction of the boulevard and park system on which the city has spent some fifteen million dollars; but the advent of a desire for a city beautiful holds first rank. Not the world famous boulevards of Paris, nor Berlin's Unter-den-Linden may offer this American metropolis any patronage in the matter of pavement and parking. The broad, tree-lined, parked drives of Kansas City exceed in mileage those of any other city of our country. In their construction, rather than confine the work to choice residential districts, and so leave the city unbalanced and offering undesirable extremes for contrast, a concerted effort was made to reclaim unsightly localities. The city bought and destroyed acres of ramshackle, unsanitary houses where dwelt vice and wretchedness. The path of its famous Paseo required the razing of blocks of old-frame dwellings which were a menace to health and an opportunity to fire.

The price of Kansas City's boulevards and drives has been paid by those who were most directly benefited. The costs were distributed proportionately among those whose property faces the improved streets and those on adjoining parallel streets. By the same sign any land which suffered loss provided its owner with an opportunity to claim damages. Grading and filling naturally brought about such conditions and the expense of compensation, in the form of a land assessment, fell on those within the benefit zone. So it came about that the man claiming redress helped to pay himself, which is right, for he actually benefited through the improvement of the dis-

trict, though not so much as some others.

The task of laying curb, street and sidewalk pavements, and putting in sewers was done by the city. In addition to this, when boulevards were underway, the parking and planting of trees beside the walks was also a city job. All of the first-named group of improvements, were paid for by those immediately profiting.

And so Kansas City has grown beautiful.

#### SETTING AN EXAMPLE IN ARCHITECTURE

To Cleveland must be awarded the honor of contributing the civic center to our ideal city, and that not alone for the dignified beauty of its results. Cleveland saw fit to confine its efforts to a reasonable task. It has followed no wild scheme, beautiful beyond doubt but equally beyond accomplishment, that would endow it for generations to come with burdensome development discouraging in its very magnitude. In building for tomorrow it determined to enjoy today.

When this city decided to group its municipal and federal buildings, in an effort to establish a permanent and beautiful center, it gave a wide berth to politics and secured the services of the first masters of the craft afforded by our country. The plans as executed by these artists called for a "T" shaped tract of land of which the arms would be used to hold the various governmental buildings while the stem was composed of a broad mall to be flanked by future office buildings. The service of nature as well as of the stone-mason entered into the plans, that grasses and trees and flowers might decorate the driveways and open spaces.

Practically all of the land required

for this development has been secured and more than one half of the entire work completed. The building planned for the occupation of the court house, post office and customs house, the first of the group to be erected and, consequently, the one to set a number of standards in design, materials and construction, was primarily modeled in miniature, even to the statuary intended for its ornamentation. After this had been studied by all of the experts a life-sized section was erected on a portion of the selected ground. This was done to assure the artists of the accuracy of their judgment, to convince their critical minds that buildings and surroundings would be in perfect harmony when subjected to the acid test of time and everyday life. Three full stories high went up the experimental structure, including columns and decorations, and all constructed of "staff," which so well represents stone.

Such a "dress rehearsal" not only gave the artists engaged in the work an opportunity to arrive at definite conclusions, but it opened the way for the whole city of Cleveland to say its say—also it aroused the interest and enthusiasm of many people who had previously given little attention to the work. The office buildings growing on the flanks of the Mall are under the critical eyes of experts, who see to it that all special restrictions are faithfully followed. Height as well as design must be approved before permission is granted to build along this chosen way. The result of these limitations and examples will be very evident throughout the future Cleveland, for the broad value of such a standard lies in its education.

Not all of the credit, however, is due the architects and originators of the civic center plan. A year or two ago, when work slackened for

lack of funds, a two-million-dollar bond issue was taken up in popular subscription by the citizens.

#### THE PLACE OF THE WOMAN

Thus far, nominally, the business of constructing an ideal American city has been in the hands of men. What, then, of the woman? We can by no means estimate her share of the work already discussed. But we now register to her credit the production of that phase of municipal perfection which must be the beginning and end of civic efficiency. Without the spirit of social betterment we may have no real city, no true government, no genuine banding together of interests and ambitions. A mass of machinery does not make a factory; a mass of individuals does not make a city.

So we go to Colorado, gaining wisdom and inspiration. Long ago, in 1893, this state granted equal suffrage. Colorado is still on the map. Woman-voting has not demoralized its homes, has not made a by-word of government, has not stifled commerce or debauched the vote. While our business is strictly with Denver, the good suffrage has done throughout the state has such an important bearing on its capital city and metropolis that it is necessary to mention at least some of these benefits.

As a result of votes being given to women the wage of the working-woman has been raised, the age of consent advanced to eighteen years, the finest school system in the country established, a juvenile court—of which there is none more justly famous than that at Denver—inaugurated and a score or two of laws passed giving women a more reasonable position in society. The practical value of these measures has proven beyond all argument the ability of women to devise and execute

wise laws. That most of them relate in some way to children goes to show that politics does not stifle the mother instinct, and at the same time indicates the far-sighted character of the feminine voter in looking after the most valuable asset of the state—the coming citizen.

I will refer to but one of these laws, and that not because of its importance, but rather to show the power contained in women's votes. A bill demanding an eight-hour day for all women employed in laundries was opposed by a prominent judge. The bill was passed and the judge was retired at the next election.

Of the things the women of Denver have done for the exclusive service of their city, as much as such benefits may be exclusive, perhaps the greatest was done at the time of the campaign for a commission form of government. Denver is now prospering under an advanced type of this system of control.

It was the vote and work of women, under the leadership of a woman state senator, that tipped the scales for Denver when the better element wanted to secure the issuance of eight million dollars' worth of bonds for the construction of a municipal water plant. When the city fought the Mothers' Compensation Act, whereby needy women with children received pay, not after the manner of charity, but for the service they render the state, the women won. If it were not for the women of the city of Denver, Judge Lindsey would have long ago lost control of the Juvenile Court; and that notwithstanding the fact that it is due to the work of the Judge and the women that school enrollment in their city has more than doubled, while delinquency has decreased almost two hundred per cent.

During the campaign preceding a recent election seventy-five women,



representing every women's organization in Denver, undertook the task of placing on record, concerning the vice situation, the entire list of candidates. Before the women would offer support each man was forced to commit himself concerning the social evil, to outline his policy and to state specifically just what the city might expect from him.

Denver has a woman police officer who is censor of amusements, and she sees to it that laws relating to her work are enforced. No boy or girl under eighteen years of age is permitted to attend a public dance after ten o'clock, unless in the company of parent or guardian; nor may

they during any hours attend a public dance held in a building where liquor is sold.

We might go on indefinitely with the progress women have made toward rendering Denver an ideal city, but we feel the facts given are sufficiently conclusive proof of the wonderful work done by these women for their community.

And so we come to the end of our story of the ideal American city, a city beautiful within and without, as good in works as it is in looks. A city setting a worthy example and spreading its influence throughout the country, slowly, perhaps, but inevitably.

## BEEF FOR BURBANK

**T**HERE is a certain widely known vegetarian who wrote a number of books on the subject—he is still writing them—who was selected by a number of other equally famous vegetarians as a sort of spokesman to go to Santa Rosa, Cal., and interview Luther Burbank on a matter of much importance—to the vegetarians.

This author and exponent of the meatless diet formed and reformed his argument on his way. He knew Burbank to be an extremely busy man. Wisely he boiled down his address to as few words as possible. When Mr. Burbank kindly received him at his cottage the noted vegetarian said, "Mr. Burbank, you, more than any other man, more than any ten men, have performed wonders with the vegetable world. You are the world's greatest authority. You know the vegetable kingdom better than any other man. For that reason we vegetarians want your backing. We want some word from you as to the value of a strictly vegetable diet and the harm of any forms of meat foods——"

"Pardon me a moment," said Mr. Burbank, stepping into another room. He came back at once.

"Dinner is served. I would like to have you join me. I trust you will find sufficient," and he ushered him in and sat him down before a great roast of beef!

The vegetarian made the best of it and ate heartily of the vegetables while Mr. Burbank partook of quantities of the beef. "I do not believe in a meatless diet as yet," said Mr. Burbank, "perhaps vegetables can be made to take the place of meat sometime, but not now. Every vegetarian I ever saw was pale. But," and he paused as his guest lighted a cigar, "I am not sufficient of a vegetarian to believe in tobacco."

# The FIVE-MILE STRETCH

*It Seems Very Simple When Ashton-Kirk, the Famous Sleuth,  
Unravels the Mystery of the Murders on the Road to Sloan's—  
In This Element Lies the Fascination of the Story*

By JOHN T. MCINTYRE

Author of "Ashton-Kirk, Secret Agent"

IT is possible that I'd never have become acquainted with Ashton-Kirk, specialist in the unusual, if it hadn't been for the big German rubber at the gymnasium. One afternoon while kneading at me, he gravely said:

"I will wrestle. It is with a Pole. Five hundred dollars a side, yet. Eh?"

He seemed immensely pleased at the prospect; and as no possible amount of man-handling could do damage to his mighty frame, I encouraged him.

"Fine!" said I. "Go to it. Be in no ungentle haste, but keep leaning on your man. That alone ought to bring you the money."

"*Danke schön*," replied he. And then: "A stakeholder we must have. We argued—*Ach Himmel*—for hours. Then your name I mentioned. Excuse me."

I assured him that I bore him no ill will on this account and he seemed relieved.

"To-day," he told me, "my five hundred dollars I will give you. Tomorrow the Pole will the same way act. Is it right?"

I answered that it was. Things had been sorely uneventful since I promoted the six-day race on the coast, and dropped the bulk of my pile with a thump. In laying quietly by to recover from this shock, I

took on an armor of soft fat which I was now trying to work off. So I welcomed even this small excitement.

To get the Pole's share of the stake I was forced to go to Creagansport, where he worked in the iron mills as a puddler. I took a train to Sloans, then changed, for Creagansport was on a branch. After a long interview with the wrestler, his manager, and a circle of suspicious friends, I placed the second five hundred dollars along with the first, banded them together and with the bundle snugly tucked away made for the station.

As the ticket window was closed, I directed some inquiries at a youth who was turning off the station lights.

"No more trains till to-morrow," he answered, cheerfully.

Now Creagansport is a most excellent place for iron mills; but it is a bad one for hotels. So I studied the time table.

"There's a train from Sloans to the city at 10:20," said I. "How far is it to Sloans by road?"

The youth took his hands away from the lamp, startled.

"Five miles," said he.

"Good road?"

"Great!"

"Where can I get a livery rig?" was the next question.

"Herrick's got some," was the reply. "He's right down the street there."

A few minutes later I held converse with Herrick. He was a short man with a round stomach and a pair of blue suspenders. When I mentioned my errand he seemed tickled.

"Team?" said he. "Sure thing." Then he faced the depths of his establishment and called to a personage unseen:

"Jake, get out a buggy and the gray mare!" Then to me: "Where to?"

"Sloans," said I.

His eyes grew round, and he swore softly. To the unseen Jake he called: "Party wants to go to Sloans."

There came a crash as of falling harness; an indignant voice made answer:

"I wouldn't go over the road to Sloans after dark locked up in a battleship. I got a wife and three children, and even if I hadn't," as a sort of afterthought, "it'd take some urging to set me at it."

Herrick placed his thumbs under the blue suspenders. He said:

"I don't think there's a man in Creagansport who'd hire out for a night trip on the Five-Mile Stretch."

I sat suddenly down in the chair from which Herrick had arisen on my arrival. It was now my turn to show signals of alarm.

"The Five-Mile Stretch!" said I. "By George! I never gave that a thought; and I've been following the case in the papers every day."

The Five-Mile Stretch was an admirably built bit of road between Creagansport and Sloans. Straight as a plumb line, it was a favorite route for the motorists and horse-men of the two towns. For years it had been of good repute; then a gust of evil suddenly swept it; in a fortnight it became a thing of fear.

"Gorman, paymaster at the mines, was the first to get bumped off," stated Herrick, reminiscently.

"Only a little while back, too, wasn't it?" I inquired.

"Two weeks ago yesterday," answered Herrick. "He had thirty thousand dollars just out of the bank at Sloans, to pay the night shift, and had started for here just after dusk. They found him a little while afterwards dead, with four bullet holes in him, and no money."

I recalled the newspaper accounts of the case. Each journal had done its startling character full justice in the types. On the very next night, while Creagansport and Sloans were still aswirl with horror, a second life paid the toll of the Five-Mile Stretch.

"Poor Dave Moore, it was," mourned Herrick. "Nice fellow, too. He started for Sloans to see if there was any fresh news about Gorman, never thinking he'd be the next. He was picked up about fifty yards from the place where they'd found the paymaster."

"Also shot?" said I.

"And also robbed," answered Herrick. "Then the detectives began to come in—on about every train. Dozens of them. You couldn't turn around without running into one. They asked a lot of questions, and looked almighty wise, and while they were doing it the killer put two more notches in his gun—in one night. This time it was old Tully, the lawyer, and Sam Phipps, of the P. B. & A. Railroad. They had been going over the road in a Benz machine; this was found ditched; and a little bit away they were gathered up—shot. Like the others, they were stripped of their valuables."

"Four in two weeks is some shooting," I commented. "The fellow— whoever he is—is an out and out

workman; he seems to get what he goes after. And your man," I added, nodding toward the regions beyond the row of stalls, "judging from his lack of interest in a night trip over the Stretch, shows that he is clinging to the notion that the marksman is not yet through."

Herrick drew the blue suspenders out as far as their elastic would permit; then he allowed them to snap back against his fat sides.

"There *will* be more," stated he, with the authority of much conviction. "That fellow's not done yet by a good bit. It wouldn't surprise me if he got half the town before he packed his 'gat' and climbed out of the section."

I cogitated for a time; then a brilliant expedient occurred to me.

"I have no desire to meet this rather enterprising person of the Stretch," said I. "Not a bit more than Jake has, in fact. We'll make Sloans in time for my train, perhaps, if we take some other road."

"There is no other road," said Herrick, finally, "except the railroad."

I left him and took another valuing inspection of Creagansport; this time I liked it even less than at first. I looked at my watch.

"Five miles from here there's a train to be had," says I to myself. "I have two hours' time and two fairly capable legs. So why dally in the matter?"

The distance was short and the time long; but the dark way and its murderous story made me feel creepy even then.

"I'll take the ties for it," was my next resolve. "They make fair traveling; and no strong-arm man of this fellow's class has ever been known to frequent them."

So I set off, as hard as I could peg, along the railroad; a mile out of town I encountered a trestle bridge which could not be negotiated

at night; ten minutes later, after a lot of scrambling over fences and such like, I found myself, willy-nilly, on the horror-haunted Five-Mile Stretch.

"But only for a little way," I promised myself. "Just give me time enough to skirt the trestle, and I'm once more for the ties."

My intention was excellent; but the aim of someone unseen was better; one solid smash laid me out in the dust, and the thousand dollars stake money, my watch, pin and a ring given me by the Forbes college boys the year I trained their track team went racing away in the distance. I haven't much recollection of what followed, except a long, staggering journey with the world roaring in my ears, then a bursting into a brilliantly lighted place which must have been the station at Sloans. Something must have been done for me while on the train, for when we got into the city my head was clearer. I calculated that Dan O'Connor's was nearer than my own quarters, so to Dan's I went.

O'Connor, once lightweight champion, was accustomed to gory faces; he took me in hand with much calmness, bandaged my hurts, propped me up in a big chair and gave me a bracing drink.

"Head don't worry me so much," I said, after I had told him of my experience. "It will get well. But the thousand dollars! What'll I do about *it*? I haven't anything like that much of my own; and you know the roar people like these two shine wrestlers always put up. They'll swear I've framed the whole thing up on them."

"We'll get it back," said Dan, quietly.

"Do you mean through the police?"

Dan snorted his contempt.

"What call have the likes of them



to be brought into a case like this?" says he. "There's only one man in the city that's up to it, and that is Mr. Ashton-Kirk."

I recalled Ashton-Kirk at once, for he was a patron of Dan's and came in frequently to put on the gloves. He was less than thirty, with a keen, dark face, and singularly brilliant eyes. In his gymnasium togs he showed the slim, powerful build of a Kid McCoy; his movements had the careless, cat-like accuracy of Lajoie.

"What's his game?" asked I of Dan.

"He claims to be a human being," replied the old lightweight; "but Osborne, the headquarters man, says he's the devil himself."

And then I found that Ashton-Kirk's chief pleasure was the untangling of the problems which spring up in the most unlooked-for places; a wealthy man who liked those perplexing, disconcerting things for which no reason can be found and before which the mind, untrained in such things, stands helpless. Crime was one of his pet interests—big, high-stepping crime of the sort that causes the evening papers to break into a typographical rash.

"It's seldom you hear of him," said Dan. "He likes the work, but don't care for the noise of it—afterwards. But, when the regular police have played their string, and have begun to grope around like blind men, Ashton-Kirk usually takes the matter up, and comes quietly through with the facts."

Next morning we went to see the crime specialist. A sober-faced manservant, in an equally sober livery, showed us into a room in which Ashton-Kirk was at breakfast. He arose, shook hands with us and saw that we were seated.

"I'm breakfasting rather late this

morning," said he. "There was an engaging little entanglement in the Treasury Department at Washington, in which they were good enough to think I'd be of some service; and I did not get back until all hours."

He quietly proceeded with his breakfast while Dan told him the nature of our errand.

"The Five-Mile Stretch!" said he, when that ill-omened place was mentioned. There was a quick interest in his eyes; he pushed back his cup, and listened intently to my experiences.

"I've been following these crimes of the Stretch as they appeared in the newspapers," he said, when I had finished. "There was a ferocity in their doing which stamped them as of exceptional quality." He arose, and added to me, with apparent irrelevance. "Your wound was not dressed by a surgeon?"

"I did it," stated Dan, apologetically.

Ashton-Kirk smiled.

"You are a master of the left hook, the shift and the side step," said he. "But as a dresser of contusions, you don't do so well."

He led us through a high-ceilinged room, lined with books, and into another whose bare walls, lead-covered stands, jars, bottles and retorts, racks of curious-looking instruments, glass tubes and burners showed it to be a laboratory. Deftly he removed the bandage and applied a cleansing liquid. As he examined the cut in my scalp he asked, casually:

"I'd like to have you describe the things stolen."

"The money," returned I, forlornly, "will have to speak for itself; it was in bills of many denominations. But the watch was a Howard and my name was engraved inside the case. The ring was massive, of an antique pattern and was set with

jade. The pin was a diamond weighing two-and-a-half carats."

"You were struck with a rather curiously shaped weapon," said he, after a space of examination. "Octagonal, perhaps, judging from the shape of the wound."

With swift fingers he replaced the bandage; then in the room where the books lined the walls, he pressed one of a series of bell-calls, pulled a pad of telegraph blanks toward him and wrote three telegrams. The grave-faced manservant appeared in answer to the bell; and the crime specialist handed him the telegrams, saying:

"Have these sent off at once; and tell Dixon to bring around the car."

As the man left the room, Ashton-Kirk turned to me.

"You might be of service if you went with me," he said. "But I suppose your hurt is rather painful as yet."

"After a good night's sleep," said I, "there's no pain left. So, if you can stand for a traveling companion," looking at myself in a glass, "one who is turbaned like a Turk and has an eye slightly but unquestionably in mourning, I'm at your service."

Dan, a few minutes later, bid us good-bye, and went on his way to his gymnasium; Ashton-Kirk and myself climbed into the big car which drew up at the door, and went flashing away to Sloans.

This was a fair-sized town, the county seat, possessed a presentable Main Street and a hotel of some appearance which faced upon it. We were making for the hotel when we became involved in a tangle of vehicles, for it was market day and the street was thronged. After some confusion, and a great deal of high language, the press opened; a small automobile of an antique pattern,

wheezing and panting, moved slowly by us.

"Look there," said Ashton-Kirk.

"I see it," answered I. "It must have been the first motor-car made."

The clerk at the hotel proved very affable and communicative.

"The party to give you the most information about the Stretch cases is old Porter, who keeps the garage down the street. He's the coroner and sat on all the murders."

The garage proved to be a corrugated-iron building with a big sign announcing "Repairs and Gasoline," and the proprietor thereof was discovered mending a tire and smoking a pipe. He grunted when he heard our errand.

"I've told everything I know so often," says he, "that I'm just a little bit tired of it. But if you folks are interested I might as well go over it once more."

The coroner laid aside the pipe and lit the cigar which Ashton-Kirk supplied him; and after he got it going properly, shook his head with solemn reflection.

"Them killings was queer things," he declared; "queer every way you take 'em. And the fact that the four victims was the very warmest and finest kind of friends seems to me to be the queerest of the lot."

"They were friends, were they?" asked the specialist in crime; and as he spoke I noted a quick flash of interest in his sharp-cut face.

"Quite buddies," replied old Porter. "Not in the regular kind of way," hastily, "for Tully and Gorman wasn't in the class of the other two. They were business friends."

"I see," said Ashton-Kirk.

"Old Tully was a lawyer; had an office up in the Baker block; and he was a shrewd one." The coroner chuckled admiringly. "You had to sew a thing up tight if you wanted to keep it away from Tully. Law!

Why he knew more ways to get around and through it than any other ten attorneys in the state."

"I've met his kind," said Ashton-Kirk, drily.

"Then there was Dave Moore," said the other. "A live young fellow. Went away west about five years ago to make his fortune. He didn't make it, so he came back and set up as a broker. Anything that had money in it was Dave's game. Smart fellow, too, and had lots of push. Wanted a million, I've heard him say; and I think he figured, after getting it, to cut some capers in the high places. Great fellow for getting himself up in dress suits and riding in taxis. Sam Phipps and him were intimate. Sam had money left him by his father; but being president of a little jerk-water railroad like the P. B. & A. didn't suit him. He was something like Dave in his ideas, only he didn't go in for the dress clothes and the taxis. Big money and big business was his style. And he'd have got it all," added the garage keeper, chewing at the end of the cigar. "For Sam was really there with the enterprise."

"And Gorman?" asked Ashton-Kirk.

"Well, he wasn't at all like the others. Kind of a hard-headed fellow who hadn't much education, and little to say. But he was sharp and, I kind of think, knew a good thing when he saw it. I guess he was useful to the others; that's why he was so thick with them. Was paymaster at the Douglas mine for years."

"The newspapers," said the specialist in crime, "were able to supply nothing in the way of a clue as to who killed these men. And the police, if they knew anything, have been careful to keep it to themselves."

The coroner laughed.

"The police and newspaper fel-

lows were as thick as flies in August," he said, "but they didn't find out anything. Nobody did. The four went out on the Five-Mile Stretch on three separate nights and were shot to death. Nobody seen the thing done, and no trace was left that would point to who done it."

"The newspapers stated that each had been shot repeatedly."

"That was right. Some of 'em had a half dozen holes in 'em. Whoever did the job made sure it was a good one."

"The bullets, I suppose, were produced at the inquest."

"There weren't none to produce. Each shot seemed to have drilled right on through."

"Ah!" And the crime specialist's mouth tightened a trifle. "I see." He went to a window and stood looking out for a moment, his fingertips drumming on the pane. Then he turned and asked: "Who found the bodies?"

"Crit Simmons, butcher at Crea-gansport, found Gorman's, the first one. He was driving over here to Sloans in a buggy on an errand. Says it was a still night and that he heard sounds from a long distance off. Heard the bell in the Catholic church strike six; almost on top of this he heard four shots in rapid succession. We calculate these were the shots that killed poor Gorman. About three miles further on Crit saw the body. And it had four holes in it."

"He didn't notice anything else?"

"No."

"Didn't see or meet anyone on the way after the shots?"

"Only Mrs. Fromme, driving her automobile."

"Mrs. Fromme?"

"You might have seen her going up the street a while ago, and driving the worst old engine on the road."

"I think," said Ashton-Kirk, "I saw her."

"She's a widow," spoke the garage keeper. "Daughter to old man Purvis, a great man in this county for years and a mine and land owner, but died broke. Only a few bits of useless land left." The coroner carefully spat under his work-bench and shook his head sadly. "Big come down for Mrs. Fromme; for she was always of the high and mighty kind. She still lives in the old Purvis place, outside Creagansport; but they say she'll have to get out soon, for the house has been sold."

"And so," said the crime specialist, "the Creagansport butcher met her on the road. Did he recall just where?"

The garage-keeper laughed.

"We all took a shy at that," said he. "Got to be quite a joke. But there's no use trying to put the thing on her," shaking his head, good-humoredly, "for she'd have the dandiest kind of an alibi. Crit met her, he says, less than four minutes after he heard the shots, chug-chugging along in that little two-cylindere car of hers. To shoot Gorman and then reach the point she did, at the time she did, she'd have to run almost a mile a minute. And that old machine she drives could never do half of that. It has just about power enough to get out of the ruts."

Ashton-Kirk smiled.

"I suppose, as you say, there's no use looking up Mrs. Fromme," said he. "But what of the finding of the other three victims?"

"Dave Moore, the second, was found by a couple of laborers early in the morning. He must have been dead for hours. And the same was the case with Tully and Phipps, only it was a farmer who first saw them."

The crime specialist threw away the cigar which he had been smoking; he took a couple of turns up

and down the garage, his head bent, his hands behind him. At length he spoke.

"Had the dead men any known enemies—of the sort who'd be likely to do a thing like this?"

The man shook his head.

"The police grabbed at that as soon as they got on the case," said he. "It was the first thing I thought of myself. But nobody could show that there was anyone."

Apparently Ashton-Kirk had secured all the information he thought possible from the official, for he signaled me and we moved toward the door. Then he paused.

"There may be some small elements of danger develop in the running of this case," he said. "And I have been careless enough to come away without my automatic pistol. What shop in town would be most likely to have that sort of thing?"

"I don't think you could get one in Sloans at all," said Porter. "Nor yet in Creagansport. We don't run much to fancy guns out this way. Parks, the hardware man at Connellsville, would be the nearest likely place."

Thanking the man we walked back to the hotel.

"Just one moment," said Ashton-Kirk. Through the window I saw him engaged in casual conversation with the clerk. Then he entered a telephone-booth where he remained some minutes. When he came out he again paused at the desk to speak to the clerk. When he reached the sidewalk I noticed a change in him; the same eager look was in his eyes which I had noted there when Dan first mentioned the Five-Mile Stretch. When he sprang into the car and took the wheel there was a swift, soft sureness in his movements that resembled nothing in the world so much as those of a panther.

"Anything doing?" I asked.



"The prospects are excellent," was the reply, as we started off.

In a few minutes the Five-Mile Stretch was reached.

"A fine piece of road," says I. "And it looks every bit as hard as it felt when I hit it with my head last night."

"Rather desolate," remarked the crime specialist as his eyes took in the unfarmed, scrubby land on either side, "and quite the place for just such a series of murders as have taken place."

In Creagansport we pulled up at a prosperous-looking shop where sides of beef, carcasses of sheep and such like hung out upon rows of hooks. The proprietor, a sullen-looking man enveloped in a huge apron, greeted us at the door.

"Mr. Simmons?" asked Ashton-Kirk.

The butcher acknowledged the name; but upon hearing the nature of our errand was not at all pleased.

"I told all I had to tell at the inquest," said he.

He resumed a cleaver which he had discarded at our coming, and began hewing up a carcass upon a block. But Ashton-Kirk only smiled.

"Your testimony before the coroner was very clear and to the point," says he. "There was only one matter upon which you were obscure."

The man paused with the cleaver uplifted.

"What was that?" he asked, curiously.

"The night of Gorman's murder was a very still one; out on the Stretch every notable sound for miles around could be heard. You mentioned the clock striking six, and the four revolver shots. But you neglected to speak of another sound which was nearer you than either, and which you must have heard first."

"And that was—?"

"The sound of Mrs. Fromme's automobile."

The butcher put down his cleaver; his sullen face crinkled up as he laughed.

"I always like to get the best of the smart Alecks," said he, highly pleased. "Now the fact of the matter is, I didn't mention about hearing the automobile because nobody asked me. But, anyway," victoriously, "you're wrong. I *didn't* hear Mrs. Fromme's automobile before I heard the bell and the shots. It wasn't till a little afterwards."

He was still grinning with the pleasure this taking down of his questioner had given him, as we left the place.

"I have found that it is always well to put that type of man into an apparently winning position," said Ashton-Kirk. "He is then more likely to tell you what you want to know."

A few doors away was the office of a small dealer in real estate. There was a big sign over the door and under it stood the proprietor, smoking a pipe and beaming ruddily upon everything. And no sooner did Ashton-Kirk's eyes fall upon the sign and the man than he stopped short, gave a pleased laugh, and went quickly toward them. Question and answer went back and forth between him and the real estate man; but the only part of the conversation that reached my ears was the dealer's words as Ashton-Kirk turned away.

"Yes, old Hendrex's the party you want. See him at the Miners Bank."

I climbed into the car after the crime specialist and we headed for Sloans.

"We'll take breath for a space, and have a snack to eat," said he. "Then, if fortune favors us, we have a chance of bringing the case to a speedy end."

While we were awaiting luncheon

at the hotel at Sloans, Ashton-Kirk as though a thought had occurred to him, arose and with an inaudible excuse went out. He returned after a little, however; and we were industriously engaged with the hotel's fare when a waitress laid a telegram at his plate.

"Hello!" said he. "I left word with the clerk about this earlier in the day, but did not expect it so soon."

He tore the message open, and ran his eye over its brief contents.

"You are revenged," says he. "The gentleman who laid you low last night has been laid by the heels this morning."

"Caught!" cried I, astonished.

"While trying to pawn your jewelry in the city. And the stake money was found on him, almost intact. It was a tramp."

I was elated at this; but at the same time could not help a feeling of disappointment.

"It never occurred to me that the criminal of the Five-Mile Stretch would turn out so commonplace," I said.

"I think," said the crime specialist, "the criminal of the Stretch, when taken, will prove the reverse of that."

"When taken," said I. "Why, isn't this—"

"I felt sure, upon first hearing your story this morning, that your knockout artist wasn't the big criminal. The method was not the same. Wounds sometimes give clues, so I had a look at yours. It was almost exactly as I expected it to be. The peculiarly-shaped cut was made by the favorite weapon of the criminal tramp—a heavy octagonal nut such as can be found along railroad tracks—fastened upon the end of a short club. Assuring myself of this, and knowing the ways of this type of criminal, I wrote the three tele-

grams describing your property and sent them to the police of the three places nearest Sloans which have pawnbrokers' shops. The result you see."

I felt of my damaged scalp.

"Then," said I, chagrined, "I have not had the honor of encountering and escaping the famous killer?"

"No," said Ashton-Kirk, and there was a grave note in his voice. "That person selects a surer weapon."

I caught his meaning, and a chill ran down my back.

"You mean that murder as well as robbery was the original intention!" said I.

"It looks very like it," he replied.

The Miners Bank at Sloans was a frame structure, painted white, and with heavily-barred windows. Ashton-Kirk inquired there for Hendrex and we were shown into his private office. Hendrex was a white-haired little man of excitable temperament, as was shown as soon as Ashton-Kirk began to talk.

"The Purvis property," he said. "Sir, there is no longer such a thing. It is gone; eaten up by rascals!"

He ran the trembling fingers of both hands through his white locks and swayed this way and that in his swivel chair. Ashton-Kirk spoke soothingly to him but to no purpose.

"The old man—Purvis—was as simple as a child; he suspected no one; the result was that he surrounded himself with people who thought of nothing but their own selfish interests. This," and the old banker actually tugged at his hair, "could only have one end; and it came, mercifully enough, only a short time before Mr. Purvis died."

Hendrex got up and paced the floor.

"I always said that if I'd had the handling of the property things would have been different. Well, after he was gone, I got the han-

dling of what was left; Mrs. Fromme, Purvis' daughter, came here and placed the few remaining acres with me to sell for her."

"Ah!" said Ashton-Kirk.

"And I," proceeded the banker, his hands clenched, "proved even easier to cheat than the old man himself. I, who always prided myself upon my business ability! They wrung me dry and I never suspected it until they had closed the deal. Then they jeered at me!"

"There were several persons concerned in the matter, then?" said Ashton-Kirk, softly.

"There were four," said the banker. "And," awed, "they are now all dead—by the hand of an assassin—Tully and Moore; Gorman and Phipps. It was like a vengeance upon them!"

Here Mr. Hendrex sat down in his office chair, and for a space was silent, his face working strongly. Then he resumed:

"It is a dreadful thing to say, but these men deserved death as much as any who ever stood upon a gallows." He held out a hand to us as though appealing to our judgment. "Gentlemen, picture to yourselves a lone woman, widowed, accustomed to great wealth, but now with a very little. That little is in a bit of barren land. An offer is made for this by these four—a good offer for such an almost useless tract, it seemed. The offer was for the land *and all on it*; for they said they desired to cut the young trees. The deal was concluded. When the deed was made over and the money paid, then their scheme came out. Upon this strip of land, near to the old Purvis coal mine, was a culm heap of mountainous size, the accumulation of thirty years. It had always been thought worthless, but now was found to have value. That for which these men had paid a few hundreds, and

so legally defrauded a helpless woman, was worth a half-million at least.

"Sharp practice," commented Ashton-Kirk, quietly. "But when Mrs. Fromme heard of this what did she say?"

"I have seen her but once since the thing happened three months ago," said the old banker. "And that was when I told her the facts. She said not a single word, but shook my hand and went away."

"A strong woman, I think," said Ashton-Kirk.

"More like a man," said the banker. "And, perhaps," regretfully, "she'd have saved herself had she kept the management of her affairs in her own hands."

The crime specialist arose.

"I think," said he, "my business requires me to see Mrs. Fromme without delay. Just how does the Purvis place lie from Creagansport?"

Mr. Hendrex gave him the required directions and off we sped along the dreaded Stretch once more. The face of my companion was now stern almost to grimness; there was a deep line across his forehead, and his lips were tightly set.

"If the police had exercised a very little imagination," said he, "they would have saved us from an exceedingly disagreeable situation." There was a short silence, then he resumed: "The fact that there were bullet holes in the bodies, but no bullets should have shown them at once that a modern automatic pistol of high power had been the weapon used. And from that clue they could have gone on easily enough."

An idea flashed upon me.

"That was your clue," I stated, with conviction. "When you told the coroner you had forgotten your pistol—"

"It was a ruse. When we reached the hotel, I called up the dealer he mentioned, and found that he'd sold

the last pistol of that type three weeks ago—to Mrs. Fromme.”

I drew in my breath sharply.

“That was a beginning,” said Ashton-Kirk. “The number of shots fired into each of the murdered men could mean but one thing—revenge. Had Mrs. Fromme such a motive? I had but a dim knowledge of her or her affairs, so I felt that this might be a difficult thing. Then the real estate dealer’s sign caught my eye, and the result of what it suggested to me you have seen.”

“Could a woman coldly plan and execute such regular out-and-out butcheries?” I demanded.

“There is no sex in crime,” answered Ashton-Kirk, quietly. “Its history shows that. Unless I am altogether wrong she made herself familiar with the movements of her victims. In the case of Gorman she stopped her car in the road to wait for him. The Creagansport butcher said, if you remember, that he did not hear the sound of her car until after the murder was done.”

“But this same man testified at the inquest, that Mrs. Fromme passed him less than four minutes after he heard the shots, and at a point three miles removed from it. This makes it physically impossible that she could have done it.”

“Suppose she had a powerful machine?”

“But she had not. We have heard what the garage keeper said about her car; and we have seen it.”

Sighting a fine old stone house, partly hidden among some towering maples, Ashton-Kirk stopped the automobile. We got down and approached the house, my companion selecting a side path which led by some out-buildings.

“That queer old car has been in my mind all day,” said he, as we went along, “and after seeing the butcher I had an idea which I put

to the test just before luncheon. I slipped out and interviewed our friend the garage-keeping coroner. But no, he had never repaired Mrs. Fromme’s car. When it required attention she always had a man from the city.”

“Well?” asked I, as he had stopped speaking.

“This fact in itself was a curious thing,” he went on. “As it presented itself to me it was in the form of a question. Why take the trouble to get a man from the city when there was a good mechanic at hand? The answer was: ‘There is a something about the machine which it is best that a local man should not know.’”

At this moment we came to a garage which was one of the out-buildings; the door stood open and within was the old car which formed the object of our discussion.

“Look!” said I, and pointed at it. “It is simplicity itself. What can there be to hide about a thing like that?”

For answer Ashton-Kirk stepped into the building; with deft, strong fingers he spun off a pair of thumb-screws and threw up the clumsy hood, revealing a motor of the most powerful modern type.

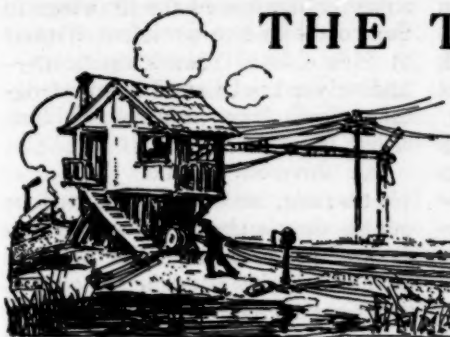
There was a sudden sound from the direction of the house; we both turned our eyes in that direction, and saw Mrs. Fromme standing by a ground-floor window which she had evidently just raised. For an instant she stood there; then with a gesture she disappeared.

With a leap Ashton-Kirk left my side, and was vaulting in at the window when a pistol shot sounded.

A moment later I reached the window, and in that space the end was made clear to the man within.

The automatic had found its fifth victim and the Five-Mile Stretch had lost its mysterious peril.





## THE TOWER MAN

*A Story of Fighting, in Which the Man in the Tower Had Three Adversaries, Only One of Which Was Human. And the Other Two Were the More Difficult of Conquest*

By THOMAS ADDISON

IT was in the tide-water section, below the fortieth parallel—a sickly country. There was a quinine bottle in every home, and whiskey. Sometimes the quinine gave out; that was carelessness. But there was always one more drink in the whiskey bottle; that was carefulness. Everybody saw to it. It was like the widow's cruse; you could depend on it, though the source of supply, it is well understood, was not the same. There were good people in the non-malarial parts of the state who contended that the devil grew the rye that mothered the amber liquid. The taste of hell was in it, they would tell you.

Ben Judd, up in the signal tower across the tracks from the squat little station on the R. K. & T., laughed at this. Perhaps it would be better put to say he smiled, for he was a man ungiven to small hilarities. Judd's trick was from twelve at night until eight in the morning, and from June to November he fought mosquitoes every minute of the eight long hours. They rose up at dusk from the sluggish waters of the Notawanna, singing wickedly, and spread out over the land like a Pharaonic plague until the mounting sun dispersed them.

Twice a day Ben Judd took his three full fingers of Triple X with a sprinkling of quinine in it, once when he went to work and again when he reached home; no more, no less. The taste of hell, considering the quinine, might lurk within the glass, but it was a good sight better than coming down with fever. For Judd was paying for the house he lived in, he and Annie, and they still owed five hundred dollars on it after five years of gruelling economy. Judd had to keep on his feet. He worked thirty days in the month, and it brought him fifty dollars. Twenty of this he banked against the mortgage, and with the help of his garden in summer and his own killed meat in winter they lived on what was left. Judd was just obliged to keep going.

He was a big, silent, serious man. Big men were needed in that tower. It had the stiffest set of switch-levers, so its reputation stood, of any block-house in the system. It required weight to swing those levers; you had to put every ounce of beef into it. A weakling could have dropped the target about as easily as he could have snatched a star from heaven. Many was the night when Judd thought that Tom

Hargett, his relief, would never come. They were the nights when the extra freights were run in on him—in the fruit season in particular. The telephone, the telegraph and the back-breaking levers kept him on the jump.

But there were other nights—in the winter mostly—when freights were few, and Judd would have hours to himself with only an occasional call from the block on either side. These were the hours in which his slow mind, dwelling persistently on one point—as a bulldog hangs to its grip—came at last upon the solution of the problem which had teased him. The proposition was to construct an electric mechanism that with the push of a button would move the levers and with the same impulse signal to the block above and below. All the past winter and the one before he had studied to this end. He was by way of being something of an electrician—he had taken a correspondence course in electrical engineering—and he had this knowledge, such as it was, to draw on.

Finally he had worked out his problem, patiently, point by point until the model stood complete before him. That was in the spring. Now it was October. As he sat in the dawning day watching the miasmatic vapors rising from the Nottawanna bottoms, and slapping at the noxious insects buzzing about his head, a slow smile grew upon his heavy features. He was thinking of Annie, and what it would mean to her should the R. K. & T. accept his offer. Of course they would, for the value of the invention could not be questioned. And he had not been grasping; he had asked but twenty thousand dollars for his rights, a thousand down—he needed that—and the rest on terms to be agreed on. They would accept, of course.

And then an odd scared feeling came upon him. It was ten days since he had mailed the drawings to the road—to the president himself at Hilton, thirty miles up north—and only a brief line of acknowledgment had been vouchsafed him. What if, after all—

He shivered a little. The telephone rang, and in answer to it he set his signals clear. A few minutes later Fifty came rumbling by, and as he lifted his hand in response to Harrigan at the throttle Judd caught himself shivering again. The chill of the morning must have got into him, he argued. He refused to consider it in any other light, and busied himself with his records. Presently a burning glow spread through his body, and he yawned. It was the last symptom, but he still fought off the admission of it to himself.

At seven-fifty Tom Hargett came lumbering up the stairs. Commonly he was a hearty sort of chap, with a loud laugh and a quick eye to fun. But this morning he was in a sour humor.

"They got to send another man here," he growled. "I'm goin' to jump this poisoned ditch. It ain't fit for a dog to live in."

He took the seat Judd had vacated and began fussing with the papers on the table.

"What's the matter, Tom?" Judd asked.

"Huh! Matter? Had the shakes last night. I'm goin' to quit before they get me proper. They ought to pay a man a thousand a month to keep this shack on the map."

"You'll be all right when frost comes," Judd told him, stifling a yawn.

Hargett spat out an oath.

"I see myself waitin' for frost. I'm through. I got a letter written I'm goin' to shoot into 'em on Sixteen. Doggone you!" He struck

savagely at a persistent mosquito trying for his wrist. "I ain't a drinkin' man, Ben, and I don't propose to stay here and get the habit. Say! You ain't lookin' right yourself. You're all flushed up. Had a chill?" "They rushed me up to five o'clock. I'm tired, that's all," Judd answered shortly.

He reached for his lunch pail, and went down the stairs and up the track to the post office. It was in Lane's general store, and Lane met him at the door with some letters in his hand.

"Ain't what you're lookin' for, Ben, I reckon," he grinned. Everybody knew what Ben was looking for. "Bills, if I kin read the printin' on 'em. For the missus."

Judd took the letters and walked on. The way led up the mockery of a hill, a rise that was barely perceptible as you made it yet which, at the summit, enabled you to gaze down upon the crawling river. Better still, it gave Judd a view of his two-story cottage, a quarter of a mile beyond, standing on a little knob back from the big road under its single hackberry tree. He had wanted it big enough, for the thought of children was in his mind—a tall, upstanding son, and a fair sweet daughter, like his Annie. He was proud of that house, and the girl in it. And hopeful.

He plodded on slowly. He was tired, for a fact, and he was troubled, because of these bills of Annie's in his pocket. He had never known her to have a bill before. She had an employe's family pass on the railroad, and to run up to Hilton cost her nothing. She went often, of late more than ever, but her folks lived there, and it was natural that she should want to see them. It was a pretty tame life they lived here; Judd acknowledged that. And she was young—twenty-two—ten years

Judd's junior. He wanted her to have a good time; but these bills—Perhaps they were not for much, a dollar or two here and there. Yet there was the house, and the patent money he had drawn from their savings; they were badly in debt, and if nothing came of the patent, and he should have to lay off with a spell of fever, why where would they come out?

Judd crunched up the gravel walk to the house. He had built that walk, wheeling the barrows of gravel from the pit in the hillside. He was rather proud of it, and of the private hedge that bordered it. He was proud of his plots of canna and coleus on either side of the hedge, and of the elephant ears under the hackberry, and the moonvine screening the porch, and the two Provence rosebushes he had nursed to bearing in the barren soil. Annie was not fond of flowers or, rather, the labor of tending them; but Judd was. In the long summer evenings, after he had weeded the kitchen garden, and brought in the wood for the cook stove, and fed the hogs, and helped Annie with the dishes, it had been his joy to water his bit of scraggy lawn and potter about among his plants and flowers. They seemed to speak to something in him, something striving dumbly for utterance, and without success.

Joe Black was smoking his pipe out in front when Judd came up. Black was Hargett's relief, a new man, and Judd had taken him in to board. The money would help out. He went on at four in the afternoon and Judd relieved him at twelve. He was not much older than Annie. "Breakfast ready?" Judd asked him.

Black shook his head.

"Nothin' doin' yet. Reckon she's overslept."

Judd made an excusatory gesture

and went on into the house. But he trod carefully now. Annie liked to sleep, and he hated to disturb her. There were three rooms on the ground floor; a small parlor, a small dining-room, and a large bedroom, the depth of the house, across from the dining-room. Black's room was on the second floor over the parlor.

Judd slipped into the dining-room. He took the whiskey bottle and a glass from the cupboard, put a stiff dose of quinine in the glass and brimmed it with the liquor. He drank this potion with a grimace, and crossed the covered landing to the cook-house. Here he built a fire in the stove, filled the kettle and set it to boil, and started in to get breakfast. He was feeling better.

In half an hour Judd came out and beckoned Black to the dining-room. Coffee, bacon and eggs, fried sweet potatoes, and some warmed-over biscuits were on the table. They sat down to this and ate in silence except for an occasional grunted word of shop-talk. Black, though, covertly eyed his companion from time to time. There was something strange in his glance. Contempt was plain, but there was something else—misgiving, it might be, or, stronger yet, fear.

Judd, looking up toward the end from his scarcely touched plate, caught the expression but failed to read it; his mind was at work on different lines. Black, however, rose a trifle hurriedly.

"Reckon I'll step down to the store and buy some plug-cut," he remarked.

As he disappeared through the door to the landing Annie came in from across the hall. She was twisting up her copper-colored hair into a final knot on her head. A cheap silk kimono, spattered with a gaudy flower scheme, was drawn about her

slim form, and a string of gold beads hung from her neck.

"I didn't know it was so late," she said, though not in apology. "I heard you movin' about."

"I tried to be careful, honey," Judd offered in excuse. He would have risen and kissed her, but in the mornings Annie sometimes was peevish.

"Well, you managed to get something together, I see," she remarked. "Is the coffee hot?"

She was at the cupboard reaching in for the whiskey bottle.

"Say, honey, I wouldn't do that!" Judd's tone was mildly expostulatory. "It's too early for you. You ain't feelin' sick, are you?"

Annie brought the bottle to the table and set it down. She neglected the quinine.

"I don't want to feel sick, that's what I'm takin' it for," she snapped at him irritably. "I don't want to get no chills and fever. Don't you take yours regular? Ain't you taught me how to use the stuff? Well, then!"

She decanted a liberal drink, dropped a spoonful of sugar in the glass, and stirred it. Judd watched her with worried eyes.

"You ought to put the quinine in, Annie, instead of that sugar. It's medicine then," he contended gently.

"Medicine! I hate that bitter stuff!" she complained, and sipped the cold toddy. She seemed to relish it. "And there's another thing I want to tell you, Ben," she continued aggrievedly. "I hate this hole of a place we're livin' in. I hate it! Hate it! I've held in all this time about it, but now I'm goin' to talk. It's only fit for razorbacks and rattlesnakes. I'm sick of it! And you got to take me away from it, or I'll go away. Give me some of that coffee, will you?"

"Annie!" cried Judd. "Why, you



can't mean that. We've got this house. It's our home; yours, honey, as much as mine, and—"

"Oh! This house!" She flung the exclamation at him fiercely. "I've heard nothin' but that this three years. I wish it would burn up or blow down or—or something! I want to go back to the city. I want to go where there's people. You ain't got no right to keep me here—nothin' to see, nothin' to do. I'm just mopin' myself to death. You ain't got no right to pen me up here!"

"But, honey, you go to the city 'most every day. I'm glad for you to do it. I don't mind gettin' the dinner for Joe and me—when Joe's here; he goes up to Hilton 'most as often as you do. I don't mind lookin' after things, honey. I—I like to do it. It's all for you—everything. I don't think of nothin' else in all my plannin's."

She did not comment on this; she was busy with her plate. Judd waited patiently for a word that might show she was not entirely in earnest. Then he said again, a little low:

"It's all for you, honey sweet—everything!"

"I want to go back to the city," she repeated sullenly. "You can sell the house. I'm tired of scrougin' and scrimpin' for it." She raised her voice to a passionate pitch. "I can't hold in no longer, I tell you. Ain't you got eyes in your head to see? I'm tired of it. Tired, tired! I'd rather be back behind the ribbon-counter in Allen & Dalton's, where you took me from, than die here like a forgotten dog!"

Judd poured himself another cup of the dark brew which passed with them for coffee. Tom Hargett had said something like that, he remembered. His hand—big enough to clasp around the slender throat of

the woman opposite—trembled as he raised it to his lips. He took a swallow of the coffee and said:

"Maybe I could sell the home. I'd lose on it, but maybe I could sell it, Annie. The thing is, my job. I'm not a fast sender. I'm slow. And they sent me down here from the T. D.'s office because I didn't have the speed. I'm slow, Annie, and that's the truth."

Her shallow blue eyes flashed at the heavy face across from her, and she clattered her knife and fork impatiently on her plate.

"I thought your patent was goin' to do such wonders for us—goin' to make us rich?" she scoffed. "It's made things worse instead of better. Sixty dollars thrown away!"

She had touched Judd's tender spot—sore to aching.

"I haven't heard from it yet," he said, a rough dignity squaring his shoulders.

"And you ain't a-goin' to hear from it," she retorted. "You took that sixty dollars out of me, that's what you did, Ben Judd! I got to suffer for it. I got to go without on account of that fool invention. I got to go round lookin' like a country nigger!"

"Annie!"

"I don't care!" She sprang up and walked the room. "I'm goin' to say it. Everybody allows you're crazy—everybody! They laugh at you behind your back; and pretty soon they'll be doin' it to your face. It makes a fool of me as well as you, and I won't stand it any longer. I won't! I won't!"

"Annie!"

Judd half rose from his chair, but dropped back into it. He felt helpless to combat this new development in his wife. He had never seen her like this before. He was stunned by her violence.

"Look at Hattie Andrews!"

shrilled Annie. "She's got things to wear. I'm ashamed when I meet her on the street. She don't have to skimp and save. She's got a husband who can take care of her. He's got a job worth talkin' about. Ninety dollars a month! And he ain't any older than Joe Black."

"Don't, honey, don't!" pleaded Judd. "I'm goin' to make good. I'm goin' to give you everything you want. We'll sell the home and go to the city. Just try and—hold in a little longer. It's comin', honey. I'm just as sure—"

"Sure! Oh, yes—sure!" She laughed hysterically. "I've been hearin' that for ages like—like the buzzin' mosquitoes in this nasty hole! You got to come with somethin' better than that, Ben Judd; somethin' a lot better. Joe Black's goin'. A month of it was enough for him. He's got a job—the first of November—seventy-five dollars. In Hilton. And you sit here like you was stuck to the place and couldn't pry loose!"

"Yes, I know, but I'm a-goin' to do it, honey." Judd spoke with an effort, for he was overwhelmed. "Give me a chance, and I'll do it. We'll get away. I'll find a job in Hilton—somethin' that'll pay better. And"—he essayed a laugh—"we'll make Hattie Andrews step up to keep ahead of you. Oh, I forgot!" He sought a diversion at any cost. "Here's mail for you. Been buyin' some little things up at Hilton, ain't you?"

He laid the letters on the table. She was standing by the window, and he looked at her with a smile that sued for peace. But a frown settled between her eyes. She came over to the table and poked at the letters with her finger, pushing them apart to read the imprints. Her carriage was defiant.

"Yes," she said. "I bought some

things last month. I needed them, and I knew it wasn't no use to ask you for money. You ain't ever got any. So—"

"I'm sorry, honey. It's the house, and the insurance, and—"

"So," she talked him down, "I bought a dress, and shoes and things, and this kiminer I got on. I've wore them all, and you ain't even noticed them. I been expectin' you to ask about them, but you haven't. You ain't noticed them. You go moonin' about with your head in the clouds, and you don't notice nothin'."

Judd winced.

"Why, yes, Annie, I've noticed them—all the time," he declared. "I've seen how smart and pretty you was lookin'. Like a picture, honey. But I thought—there's the house, and — and other expenses — I thought perhaps your ma gave 'em to you. I thought—"

She cut him short with a cry of anger.

"Ma! She's got all she can do to meet her rent. I'm goin' to pay these bills—some of them—with Joe Black's boardin' money."

"Twenty dollars!" Judd looked at her aghast. "Why, Annie, I'd kinder reckoned on that to help out—"

"Oh, my God!" screamed the girl. She clutched at her hair and dragged it down shimmering about her shoulders. "I can't stand it! I'll go mad with this countin' pennies. Ravin' mad! There's thirty-nine dollars' worth of bills there, Ben Judd, and you got to pay the balance. You! If you can't support me I—I'll find somebody who can!"

She put her hand to her throat, choking. Judd followed the movement with his eyes and saw, consciously, for the first time the beads dropping on her bosom. He gathered up the letters and placed them in his pocket.

"It's all right, Annie," he said gravely. "I will pay the bills, all of them. You didn't mean what you said—I know that—but don't ever say it again, Annie. Please! It—it hurts."

Her face changed. It whitened suddenly, and her eyes evaded his.

"Well," she returned more quietly, "it ought to hurt. I'm goin' to town on Sixteen. Maybe I'll come back to-night, and maybe I won't. I'll stay at ma's if I don't."

She moved toward the door. Judd, who had risen, stopped her.

"Don't stay, Annie," he begged. "I—I like to find you here when I come home in the mornin's. It don't seem just like home when you ain't here—in the mornin's," he amended hastily. "Come back on Thirty-two, Annie. I'll have supper ready, and we'll plan about movin' away from here."

"Maybe," she conceded grudgingly, and made to go. But again he stopped her.

"Those beads. They're real pretty, Annie. And I know I've never seen them before. Are they in the bills?"

She started, for she had forgotten the beads. She had slept in them, and she had meant to take them off before coming in.

"No, they ain't in the bills," she told him with a hostile look. "They're a present."

"Oh!" said Judd. "Who from?" She gave him an oblique glance, tilting her head mutinously.

"Guess!" she mocked, and left him.

Judd stood where he was for a long minute. He tried to think, but his head was aching now and a dull, leaden feeling was in his limbs. And in his heart. It was a relief to turn to and clear up the dishes. If Annie was going to take Sixteen she would have just time to dress.

He was in the kitchen when she

started off, with a called word of leave-taking. He came through the house to the front door, and watched her go down the road. He had done it many times, and nearly always she had looked back at the brow of the hill and waved her hand to him. She did not do it this time, and Judd returned to his dishes with a curious sense of loss.

When he had tidied up the kitchen he loitered around among his flowers, but he was listless and oppressed. He had no joy in them. Soon he went in and up to a bare room on the second floor. It was a habit with him. There was a cot in the room, and he usually took a nap on it from nine till one, and again at night from eight until it was time to leave for his work. He did this so that he would not disturb Annie, who slept downstairs.

To-day, though, he would have to shorten his nap, for he must get dinner for Black. He set his alarm clock at twelve and drowsed off; and it seemed but a moment had passed when the bell called him. He was aching all over now, and his teeth clicked together. There was no sign of Black about the house, and suddenly it occurred to Judd that their boarder had also gone to town; had gone on the same train with Annie. Black had a right to do this, but—

"Guess," Annie had said to him. Was it Black who had given her the beads? Well, suppose he had? What of it? He kept repeating the inquiry to himself as though, with persistence, the answer would become apparent.

Judd took twenty grains of quinine, omitting the whiskey this time, and went into Annie's room and lay down. Somehow it made him feel less lonesome this day; made him feel as if he were resting in the shadow of her presence. The drug

acted on him as a soporific—it does with some—and soon he dropped into a stupor. He woke to find Annie standing over him. It was dark, and the lamp was burning. She had come home on the eight-thirty. She had come home. It was his first thought as his eyes opened on her.

"Are you sick?" she asked; but there was no warmth in her tone.

"Sick? No!" disclaimed Judd stoutly, getting to his feet. He did not want her to know. "I just laid down for a while. You had supper at your ma's, didn't you?" He added this anxiously.

"Yes. You didn't think I was goin' to wait till now for it, did you? And I'm plumb wore out. I'm goin' to bed."

As she said this a faint odor of liquor reached him. She turned away and began taking off her things. He watched her for a time in heavy silence. Then he said:

"I haven't seen Joe Black around to-day. I reckon he came home on Twenty-one and went right to work."

Her back was to him. She was loosening her shoe laces, her foot on a chair by the window.

"I reckon so," she answered carelessly. "He went up on Sixteen."

Judd moved over to her and touched the beads on her neck.

"Annie, did Joe Black give you them?"

Something in the way he said this appeared to stir the girl to a quick resentment. It was like firing a hidden mine. She put her foot down and wheeled on him. Her bosom heaved and her eyes glittered; and the sour smell of stale liquor came to him again.

"Yes—if you've got to know!" she blazed. "He gave them to me. That's more than you'd think of doin', you—you old skinflint!"

She gasped out these last words in a fury of sneering scorn. A change came over Judd—the change that in a very patient man bodes ill. But he spoke to her quietly.

"Take them off, Annie."

"I won't!" she defied him. "They're mine. You think a wife is nothin' but a slave; that she ain't got no right to wish for anything but wait on you!"

"Take them off," he bade her, still quietly but in a voice that was new to her.

"I won't!" she panted, retreating from him.

He followed her, stepping deliberately, until she stood hemmed in the farther corner of the room.

"I don't think you understand, Annie," he said. "It ain't proper for a married girl to take presents from another man. I want those beads."

He held out his hand for them. There was a fateful finality in the action, a stony calm about him that reached through the woman's fury and put fear into her heart. She recognized that her ascendancy over him, for the time at least, was quite gone. Her hand tremblingly sought her neck and unclasped the trinket. For a moment she held it cuddled in her palm; then, crying out at him in a last excess of defeated passion, she hurled the beads full in his face.

Judd caught them as they fell, and without a word he left her cowering in her corner. He went about his belated chores; feeding the hogs and bringing wood for the morning to the kitchen. The round moon sailed in a cloudless sky, and he could see by it well. He carried water to the front of the house and gave drink to his thirsty plants. The moonvine was in all the glory of its starry, snow-white flowers. Often when he had come home in the night they had seemed to him to typify the



sleeping innocence of Annie. His heart softened to her now as he looked at them; but the hurt to his pride and love was too recent to move him to spoken words of forgiveness.

AT half after eleven Judd set out for the station. He had taken his dram of whiskey and quinine and he hoped he could get through the night. He was surprised when he came to Lane's store to see a light in it. He looked in, and Lane hailed him.

"Got a letter for you, Ben. From the road. Came down on the eight-thirty. Been workin' on my books; that's what makes me so late."

He handed Judd a long and weighty envelope. Judd put it in his pocket.

"Ain't you goin' to open it?" Lane asked, his curiosity shocked with disappointment.

"Got the whole night to read it in," replied Judd tersely, and went his way. He wished to be alone when he opened that letter.

"Hargett went up to-night," Black greeted him as he entered the block-house. "Sick. They're goin' to send your relief down on Fourteen."

Judd nodded. They exchanged a word on the business of the night, and Black started to go.

"Wait a minute," Judd said to him. He tossed the string of beads on the table. "You'd better hunt another boardin'-house, Mr. Black—quick! There'll be only two at breakfast at my house to-day."

Their eyes clashed. The click of the telegraph key calling B. O.—B. O.—B. O. went unheeded. Black weakened.

"Why—say—Ben. I—" he began.

"Good-night!" Judd interrupted him sternly.

Black picked up the beads and

vanished—the tower-room could not hold them both. Judd answered the call of the key, and this done he took his letter from his pocket. He held it a long time in his hand, poring on it. He was afraid to open it. But at last he summoned courage and slit the envelope. A low, tremulous sound escaped him—a sobbing sound, pumped up from the very bowels of him. For on the table lay a thousand-dollar check, and in consideration for it an agreement he was to sign. A line from the president requested his presence at the office in the morning.

Judd went about his duties in a haze of thrilling dreams; and through it all Annie's face—no longer sullen, no longer cold and unresponsive—beamed on him. It was of her he thought in this supreme hour of his reward. His heart was emptied of all save love for her. His one wish, riding down all others, was to make her happy. She should dress like a queen; her every desire should be gratified; she should never again have complaint to make of him. "Beads!" Judd laughed aloud. She should have diamonds! Poor little Annie! It had been hard for her—mighty hard—here in this pesthole of a place.

At four o'clock Number Sixty Extra slowed down, though the block was clear, and a man dropped off from the caboose. He came up the stairs whistling—a hale, hearty young fellow with the build of a college halfback.

"I'm your relief—Henry Bruner," he announced. "Say, they're talking about you up there—that electric lever thing. I'm fresh as fish, and I thought you might like to get off earlier—go in on the six o'clock and shine up a few before calling on the Old Man. He's fussy, rather. I'm a sort of relation of his—by marriage—and I know him."

They shook hands, and Judd thanked him.

"Oh, that's all right," the youngster laughed. "I'm learning the trade from the cellar up. This stuff here is my present meat, and I'm a little anxious to fight your outfit. It's really got a bad name, you know. Beat it, old chap, and tell the wife. Got one, haven't you? Good!"

So it happened that Judd, a great joy swelling in his breast, found himself striding up the road to his house with the moon hanging low behind him and the twittering dawn breaking all around. As he came near he saw that Joe Black's window shades were down; but a thread of light below one of them witnessed that he was awake.

"Packing up," thought Judd grimly. "Going to make an early start. He'd better."

Judd did not go up the graveled path to the door; he was afraid it would alarm Annie at that hour. He made his way silently over the lawn, and as silently let himself in with his key. He tiptoed in the dim light to the door back of the stairs; but as he was about to tap gently on it—for he would not arouse Annie rudely—he discovered that it was a finger's-breadth ajar. Had she forgotten to lock it?

He pushed mutely in. Annie was not there. He went over to the bed. The print of her head, he could see, was on the pillow. He laid his hand on it—it was cold. He ran his hand down the sheet under the half-tossed back covers—it was quite cold. Judd straightened up and stood stockstill. Only his head moved as he looked sluggishly from side to side of the room. Annie's street-dress lay tumbled on the chair where she had thrown it when she came home, and on the floor by it were her shoes; but her kimono and slippers were gone.

"Why, no," he whispered, framing the slow words painfully—"why, no, it can't be! It—can't—be. Annie? My little Annie? My wife?"

He waited, like one listening, his breath a mere shred of life fluttering on his stiffened lips. The light broadened in the room; the seconds, clacked off by the cheap wooden clock on the mantel, raced one another to oblivion; and yet he waited. Then like a thunderbolt the whole blinding truth smote him to earth. He did not cry out; he fell dumbly, face down, upon the bed and his great bulk heaved with the storm let loose in him.

After a time he grew still, and presently lifted himself from the bed. Death was in his face. He stepped to the mantel stealthily as a panther treads, and possessed himself of the loaded pistol that lay there always at night in guard of Annie. He was, at that moment, reduced to one dimension; he could act only in one way. He must kill!

Judd passed noiselessly out into the hall. He crept up the stairs. Voices came to him now from Joe Black's room, and a light laugh. It was Annie! The pistol tightened in his clutch. The white line of his mouth thinned yet more. At the door he paused, his hand reaching warily for the knob. If it was locked one bunt of his shoulder would send it smashing in. But it jumped wide to his sudden grip—a shrill cry, a startled oath rising to it—and he loomed on the threshold, a tense and terrible figure.

Judd's eye swooped up every detail of the room: the disorder of it; the chest of drawers pulled open; the bed littered with clothing; the trunk yawning at the foot of it; the little stand at which Black and Annie were seated, bottle and glasses between; even the wisp of smoke curling up from the pipe the man

held. In one sweeping glance he took this in, and yet, as it seemed, his gaze never left Black, the weapon leveled at him swerved never a hair's breadth from the straight line to his heart.

From outside came the clear call of a quail in the wood-lot across the road, but in the room there was not a sound. The man at the table sat as if turned to stone; and the woman. The liquor-flush was washed from her face in the wave of a great fear rolling in upon her. Her eyes were wide and strained. She did not know this man standing there in the doorway so deadly still.

Judd spoke, his voice colorless and curiously even. He flung a command at Black—

"Pull your gun. You'll have your chance."

But the man frozenly shook his head. He was not armed. A scowl furrowed Judd's brow. He deliberated darkly. Could he strike down this skunk in cold blood? Black, bursting the bonds of mortal panic that fettered him, screamed a hoarse entreaty:

"God! Don't shoot, Ben. I haven't harmed her. I swear it. Don't shoot!"

A cold sweat dewed him. His flesh was ashen. The pipe clattered from his nerveless hand to the floor. Annie turned a slow, leaden look upon him. A little shiver ran through her. She turned again to the man in the door—this strange, compelling, deadly person she did not know. Judd's eyes ignored her, as from the first.

"Get up!" he said to Black. "Throw your things into that trunk. Be quick at it."

The other stumbled to his feet. He moved about in a sort of dreadful haste. Only once, as he finished, did he come to a stand seeking words.

"It hasn't been half an hour," he mumbled. "I heard her at the water-bucket in the hall, and called her up. A good-bye dram, that's all, Ben. I swear—"

"Stop, damn you!" Judd blazed at him. "Run that trunk out of here. Out of the house. You've two minutes. Move!" He wheeled on the woman. "And you! Go with him, if that's your wish. But hurry! I am afraid of myself."

He stepped aside from the door. Black, feverishly dragging the trunk, shot by him and bumped his way down the stairs. Annie did not move.

"Well?" Judd challenged her harshly. "Are you going?"

"No," she said, very low.

Judd went from window to window snapping up the shades. He blew out the lamp on the dresser, laid the pistol away, hung an irresolute instant on his heel, then swung around to his wife.

"The way is open to you. Why don't you go with him? There's nothing left here for either of us."

She glanced up at him, and as quickly away. Something stirred in her, something she did not understand yet which thrilled her strangely—the feeling of the primitive woman in face of her master-man.

"I'm goin'," she answered, "but it will be alone. Not with him—the coward!" She added fiercely: "Why didn't you kill him? Why don't you kill me?"

"You?" Judd recoiled from the thought. His cry of vengeance had been only for the man. "You know why I didn't kill him. And you?" He looked down on the loosely-coiled wealth of her burnished hair, the white neck, the slim form; and he trembled. "Why—Annie—I couldn't lay a finger on you in harm even if it was a real knife you have run plumb through my heart."

She made no reply, but sat silently studying the floor. Judd stood as silently over across the table from her. His eyes were on the whiskey bottle and the glasses by it. He seemed to hear Annie's words again—

"You taught me how to use it."

Well, so he had, in a way, and it had led to this! He had brought her to this pestilent place where all fought a common enemy with a common weapon—only Annie had turned it against herself. It had led to this, step by step until she was lost to him. As it struck home his hands clenched till the nails bit into the flesh. Then, with a snarl for his own weak will, he caught up the bottle and hurled it crashing through the window.

"By God! I have done with the stuff!" he cried. "It leads to hell!"

Annie cowered in her chair at sight of this destroying violence. Yet her speech was freed by it.

"Ben! Oh, Ben!" she gasped. "I've been bad—but not what you think. Not that, Ben! I'm goin'—there ain't no place for me here now—but I want you to know I ain't all bad. I stopped. Somethin' kep' me back. Even the liquor didn't quite drown it, though maybe it would have if I'd kep' on."

She swallowed painfully, and with a timid gesture besought his patience.

"And Ben—while I'm talkin'—jes' want to say it kind of comes to me that—that I ain't understood you, maybe, like I ought. I thought you was slow, and—and mean about money, and didn't care much whether I had things or not—jes' thought about the house, not me. But I reckon I can see now how it was with you, and I'm sorry. I ain't been a good wife to you, Ben. I've been bad. But there's one thing—I ain't never lied to you, not once, and—and I want you to remember that."

Judd did not answer. He was as if rooted to the spot. She waited uncertainly, then got up wearily to her feet. Her voice fluttered.

"It won't take me long to pack up, Ben. I'll hurry. Jes' a few things I need. The rest you can send after me to Ma's."

She moved toward the door, her head bent, her hands hanging listlessly at her sides. Judd essayed an arresting word, but his teeth were clicking now with the recurrent chill, and his tongue lay dry in his mouth. With a mighty effort he mastered the attack.

"Annie!" he choked out. "Wait!"

She turned to him and met his eyes. They were burning with the fever light, but there was in them also something that sent her hand to her heart.

"Annie," said Judd, laboring to hold fast to himself, "we have both made mistakes, mine as bad as yours. Shall we try again? You haven't ever lied to me, little girl, and—thank God—that's the plank that saves us. Say to me you wish to stay because—oh, honey!—because you want to! There's nothing else in the whole world matters to me."

The girl's shallow blue eyes deepened with a rush of tears. She flew back to Judd with wide flung arms.

"Oh, Ben, Ben!" she sobbed. "I ain't ever really loved you till now. I want to stay. I want to make up to you for what I've been. Ben, Ben! I love you!"

Her head was on his broad breast, his arms around her crushing her to him. And the room was flooded with the rosy dawn. Thus they stood a while. Then, of a sudden, a low, exultant laugh broke from Judd—

The president's letter was in his pocket, and Annie's head was resting on it. Ah, when she should know!



# THE HYPNOTIZED BURGLAR

*In Which Joseph Bindle, Furniture-Remover, and Professor Conti, the Great Mesmerist, Each Puts His Respective Accomplishments to a New Use. Esop Would Have Drawn a Moral from the Tale; Can You?*

By HERBERT JENKINS

"Y'ought to be ashamed o' yerself!" said Mrs. Bindle stormily to her husband, who stood regarding her with an expressionless face. "Y'ought to be ashamed o' yerself, yer great hulking brute"—Bindle was much below medium height and average weight—"leavin' me to keep our sticks together—me a woman, too, a-keeping you in idleness! Why, I'd steal 'fore I'd do that, that I would!"

With philosophic self-effacement, Bindle picked up his cap and coat and quickly vanished before the cloud of dust that rose from his wife's broom.

A journeyman furniture-remover by profession, Joseph Bindle was also a philosopher. Like Socrates, he bowed to the whirlwind of his wife's wrath. He had applied for every job he heard of, quite irrespective of his ability to fill it, and, knowing that he was doing all that was humanly possible, he faced the world with unruffled calm. He was a little man, bald-headed and red-nosed, but he possessed a great heart. Two things in life he loved above all others—beer and humor—yet he permitted neither to interfere with the day's work, save under very exceptional circumstances. Mrs. Bindle's careless words sank deep into his imagination. Steal! Well, he had no strongly grounded objection,

provided he were not caught at it. Steal! The word seemed to open up new possibilities for him.

A week later Bindle obtained a day's work in West Kensington. Having eaten a hearty supper, and in the happiest frame of mind, he strolled along towards Walham Green. The night was young—it was barely nine o'clock—and his whole being yearned for some adventure. He was still preoccupied with the subject of larceny. His wits, Bindle argued, were of little or no use in the furniture-removing business, where mediocrity formed the standard of excellence. There would never be a Napoleon of furniture-removers, but there had been several Napoleons of crime. If a man were endowed with genius, he should also be supplied with a reasonable outlet for it.

Walking meditatively along the North End Road, Bindle's foot struck against something that jingled. He stooped and picked up two keys attached to a ring, which he swiftly transferred to one of his pockets and passed on. Someone might be watching him. Two minutes later he drew forth his find for examination. Attached to the ring was a metal tablet, upon which was engraved the words: "These keys are the property of Professor Sylvanus Conti, 13, Audrey Mansions,

Queen's Club, West Kensington W., Reward for their return, 2/6."

The keys were obviously those of the outer door of a block of mansions and the door of a flat. If they were returned, the reward was two shillings and sixpence, which would bring up the day's takings to seven shillings and sixpence. If, on the other hand, the keys were retained for the purpose of— At that moment Bindle's eye caught sight of a ticket upon a stall littered with old locks and keys, above which blazed and spluttered a paraffin torch. "Keys cut while you wait," it announced. Without a moment's hesitation he slipped the two keys from their ring and held them out to the proprietor of the stall.

"'Ow much to make two like 'em, mate?" he inquired.

The man took the keys, examined them for a moment, and replied—

"One an' thruppence from you, captin'."

"Well, think o' me as a pretty girl and say a bob, and it's done," replied Bindle.

The man regarded him with elaborate gravity for a few moments. "If yer turn yer face away, I'll try," he replied, and proceeded to fashion the duplicates.

Meanwhile Bindle deliberated. If he retained the keys, there would be suspicion at the flats, and perhaps locks would be changed; if, on the other hand, the keys were returned immediately, the owner would trouble himself no further. At this juncture he was not very clear as to what he intended to do. He was still undecided when the four keys were handed to him in return for a shilling.

The mind of Joseph Bindle invariably responded best to the ministrations of beer, and when, half an hour later, he left the bar of "The Scarlet House," his plans were

formed and his mind made up. He vaguely saw the hand of Providence in this discovery of Professor Conti's keys, and he had determined that Providence should not be disappointed in him, Joseph Bindle.

First he purchased a cheap electric torch, guaranteed for twelve or twenty-four hours, the shopkeeper was not quite certain which. Then, proceeding to a chemist's shop, he purchased a roll of medical bandaging. With this he retired up a side street and proceeded to swathe his head and the greater part of his face, leaving only his eyes, nose and mouth visible. Drawing his cap carefully over the bandages, he returned to the highway, first having improvised the remainder of the bandaging into an informal sling for his left arm. Not even Mrs. Bindle herself would have recognized him, so complete was the disguise.

Ten minutes later he was at Audrey Mansions. No one was visible, and with great swiftiness and dexterity he tried the duplicate keys in the open outer door. One fitted perfectly. Mounting to the third floor, he inserted the other in the door of No. 13. The lock turned easily. Quite satisfied, he replaced them in his pocket and rang the bell. There was no answer. He rang again, and a third time, but without result. "Does 'is own charin'," murmured Bindle laconically, and descended to the ground floor, where he rang the porter's bell, with the result that the keys were faithfully redeemed.

Bindle left the porter in a state of suppressed excitement over a circumstantial account of a terrible collision that had just taken place in the neighborhood between a motor-bus and a fire-engine, resulting in eleven deaths, including three firemen, whilst thirty people had been seriously injured, including six firemen. He himself had been on the front

seat of the motor-bus and had escaped with a broken head and a badly cut hand.

## II

PROFESSOR CONTI surveyed himself mournfully in the mirror as he undid the buckle of his ready-made evening-tie and placed it carefully in the green cardboard box upon the dressing-table. In these days a tie had to last the week through, aided by the application of French chalk to the salient folds and corners.

Professor Sylvanus Conti, who had been known to his mother, Mrs. Wilkins, as Willie, emphasized in feature and speech his Cockney origin. He was of medium height, with a sallow complexion—not the sallowness of the sun-baked plains of Italy, but rather that of Bermondsey or Bow.

He had been a brave little man in his fight with adverse conditions. Years before, chance had thrown across his path a doctor whose hypnotic powers had been his ruin. Tommy Wilkins had shown himself an apt pupil, and there opened out to his vision a great and glorious prospect. First he courted Science; but she had proved a fickle jade, and he was forced to become an entertainer, much against his inclination. In time the name of Professor Sylvanus Conti came to be known at most of the second-rate music-halls as "a good hypnotic turn"—to use the professional phraseology.

One consolation he had—he never descended to tricks. If he were unable to place a subject under control, he stated so frankly. He was scientific, and believed in his own powers as he believed in nothing else on earth. He had achieved some sort of success. It was not what he had hoped for; still, it was a living. It

gave him food and raiment and a small bachelor flat—he was a bachelor, all self-made men are—in a spot that was Kensington, albeit West Kensington.

The Professor continued mechanically to prepare himself for the night. He oiled his dark hair, brushed his black moustache, donned his long nightshirt, and finally lit a cigarette. He was thinking deeply. His dark, cunning little eyes flashed angrily. A cynical smile played about the corners of his mouth, half hidden by the bristly black moustache.

Only that evening he had heard that his rival, "Mr. John Gibson, the English Mesmerist," had secured a contract to appear at some syndicate halls that had hitherto engaged only him, Professor Conti. This man Gibson had been dogging Conti for months past. The barefaced effrontery of the fellow added fuel to the fire of his rival's anger. To use an English name for a hypnotic turn upon the English music-hall stage! He should have known that hypnotism, like the equestrian and dress-making arts, is Continental, without exception or qualification. Yet this man, "John Gibson, the English Mesmerist," had dared to enter into competition with him, Professor Sylvanus Conti. Gibson descended to tricks that placed him beyond the pale of science. He had confederates who, as "gentlemen among the audience," did weird and marvelous things, all to the glory of "The English Mesmerist."

Still brooding upon a rather ominous future, the Professor wound his watch—a fine gold hunter that had been presented to him three years previously by "a few friends and admirers"—and placed it upon the small table by his bedside, then, carefully extinguishing his half-smoked cigarette, he got into bed.

It was late, and he was tired. A sense of injustice was insufficient to keep him awake for long, and switching off the electric light, he was soon asleep.

### III

FROM a dream in which he had just discomfited his rival, "The English Mesmerist," by placing under control an elephant, Professor Conti awakened with a start. Intuitively he knew that there was someone else in the room. Lying perfectly still, he listened. Suddenly his blood froze with horror. A tiny disc of light played round the room and finally rested upon the small table beside him. A moment later he heard a faint sound as of two metallic substances coming into contact. Instinctively he knew it to be caused by his watch-chain touching against the candlestick.

He broke out into a cold sweat. Moist with fear, he reviewed the situation. A burglar was in the room. He was taking his—the Professor's—presentation watch and chain. The thought of losing these, his greatest treasures, awakened in his mind the realization that he must act, and act speedily. With a slow, deliberate movement, he worked his right hand up to the pillow, beneath which he always kept a revolver. It seemed an eternity before he felt the comforting touch of the cold metal. He withdrew the weapon with deliberate caution. The sound of someone tiptoeing about the room continued—soft, stealthy movements that, however, no longer possessed for him any terror. A fury of anger, a species of blood-lust had gripped him. Someone had dared to break into his flat. The situation became intolerable. With one swift movement he sat up, switched on the electric light, and cocked his revolver.

An inarticulate sound, half cry, half grumble, came from the corner by the chest of drawers. The back of a head, looking curiously like a monkish crown, flashed into a face, white, unshaven and drawn, with terror in its eyes.

"Hands up, or I shoot! Up!"

The Professor did not recognize his own voice. Suddenly he laughed. The ludicrous expression upon the sallow face of his visitor, the unnatural posture in which he crouched, his own triumphant sense of victory—it was all so ridiculous. He was quite calm and collected now, as if the discovery of a burglar in his bedroom were a thing of nightly occurrence. There seemed nothing strange in the situation. The things to be done presented themselves in a natural and logical sequence. He was conscious even of the dramatic possibilities of the situation.

"Turn round and face the wall, quick!" he rapped out. The sallow face vanished, and in its place reappeared the tonsured scalp. Carefully covering with his revolver the unfortunate Bindle, whose first effort at burglary seemed likely to end so disastrously, Professor Conti slipped out of bed and, without removing his eyes from his visitor's back, sidled toward a small chest at the other side of the room. This he opened, and from it took a pair of handcuffs, a property of his profession. With calm decision he ordered Bindle to lower his hands behind him. For one brief moment Bindle seemed to meditate resistance. He gave a swift look over his shoulder, but, seeing the determined look in the Professor's eyes and the glint of the revolver, he meekly complied. The handcuffs clicked and the Professor smiled grimly.

As he stood gazing at the wall, Bindle's mind was running on what Mrs. Bindle would say when she



heard the news. Fate had treated him scurvily in directing him to a flat where a revolver and handcuffs seemed to be part of the necessary fittings. He fell to wondering what punishment novices at burglary generally received. He was awakened from his reverie and the contemplation of a particularly hideous wallpaper by a sharp command to turn round. He did so, and found himself faced by a ludicrous and curiously unheroic figure. Over his nightshirt his captor had drawn an overcoat with an astrachan collar and cuffs. Beneath the coat came a broad hem of white nightshirt, then two rather thin legs, terminating in a pair of red woollen bedroom slippers. Bindle grinned appreciatively at the spectacle. He was more at his ease now that the revolver had been laid aside.

"You're a burglar, and you're caught." The Professor showed his yellow teeth as he made this pronouncement. Bindle grinned. "You'll get five years for this," proceeded the Professor encouragingly.

"I was just wonderin' to myself," responded Bindle imperturbably. "The luck's wi' you, guv'nor," he added philosophically. "Fancy you 'avin' 'andcuffs as well as a revolver! Sort o' Scotland Yard, this 'ere little 'ole. 'Spose you get a touch o' nerves sometimes, an' like to be ready. Five years, you said. Three was my figure. P'raps you're right; it all depends on the old boy on the bench. Ever done time, sir?" he queried cheerfully.

Professor Conti was too intent upon an inspiration that had flashed upon him to listen to his visitor's remarks. Suddenly he saw in this the hand of Providence, and at that same moment Bindle saw upon the chest of drawers one of the Professor's cards bearing the inscription—

PROFESSOR SYLVANUS CONTI,  
Hypnotist and Mesmerist.  
13, Audrey Mansions,  
Queen's Club,  
West Kensington,  
London, W.

He turned from the contemplation of the card and found himself being regarded by his captor with great intentness. The ferret-like eyes of the Professor gazed into his as if desirous of piercing a hole through his brain. Bindle experienced a curious, dreamy sensation. Remembering the card he had just seen, he blinked self-consciously, licked his lips, grinned feebly, and then half closed his eyes. Professor Conti advanced deliberately, raised his hands slowly, passed them before the face of his victim, keeping his eyes fixed the while. Over the unprepossessing features of Bindle there came a vacant look, and over those of the Professor one of triumph. After a lengthy pause the Professor spoke.

"You are a burglar. Repeat it."

"I am a burglar," echoed Bindle in a toneless voice. The Professor continued:

"You sought to rob me, Professor Sylvanus Conti, of 13, Audrey Mansions, Queen's Club, West Kensington, by breaking into my flat at night."

In the same expressionless voice Bindle repeated the Professor's words.

"Good!" murmured Conti. "Good! Now sit down." Bindle complied, a ghost of a grin flitting momentarily across his face, as the Professor turned to reach a chair, which he placed immediately opposite to that on which Bindle sat and about two yards distant. With his eyes fixed, he commenced in a droning tone—

"You have entered my flat with the deliberate and cold-blooded in-

tention of robbing, perhaps of murdering, me. It is my intention to write a note to the police, which you will yourself deliver, and wait until you are arrested. Now repeat what I have said."

In a dull, mechanical voice, Bindle did as he was told. For a full minute the Professor gazed steadfastly into his victim's eyes, then, rising, he went to a small table and wrote the following note—

13, Audrey Mansion,  
Queen's Club, W.,  
September 15, 191—.

DEAR SIR,—

The bearer of this letter is a burglar who has just broken into my flat to rob me. I have placed him under hypnotic control, and he will give himself up. You will please arrest him. I will 'phone in the morning.

Yours faithfully,

SYLVANUS CONTI,

Professor of Hypnotism and Mesmerism.

To the Superintendent,

The West Kensington Police Station, W.

Sealing and addressing the letter, the Professor then removed the handcuffs from Bindle's wrists, bade him rise, and gave him the envelope.

"You will now go and deliver this note," said Conti, explaining with great distinctness the whereabouts of the police-station. Bindle was proceeding slowly towards the door, when the Professor called upon him to stop. He halted abruptly.

"Show me what you have in your pockets."

Bindle complied, producing the presentation watch and chain, a gold scarf pin, a pair of gold sleeve links, one diamond and three gold studs and a diamond ring. For a moment the Professor pondered, then, as if

coming to a sudden determination, he told Bindle to replace the articles in his pockets and dismissed him.

Having bolted the door, Professor Conti returned to his bedroom. For half an hour he sat in his nondescript costume, smoking cigarettes. He was thoroughly satisfied with the night's work. It had been ordained that his flat should be burgled, and he, Sylvanus Conti, professor of hypnotism and mesmerism, seizing his opportunity, had diverted to his own ends the august decrees of Providence. He pictured Mr. William Gibson reading the account of his triumph in the evening papers. He saw the headlines. He would inspire them. "Professor Conti's Master-stroke. A Burglar Hypnotized and Made to Proclaim His Own Guilt. A Great Triumph." He saw it all. Not only would those come back who had forsaken him for "The English Mesmerist," but others would want him. He saw himself a "star turn" at one of the West End halls. He saw many things—fame, fortune and a motor-car, and, in the far distance, the realization of his great ambition, a scientific career. In a way he was a little sorry for the burglar, the instrument of Providence.

#### IV

WITH elaborate caution Bindle crept down the three flights of stairs that led to the street. Everything was quiet and dark. As he closed the outer door behind him, he heard a clock striking four. He stepped out briskly. He wanted to think, but, above all, he was hungry and thirsty. He began to whistle as a precaution against the attentions of the police. No one would suspect of being a burglar a man who was whistling at the top of his power. Once he stood still and laughed,

slapped his knee, recommenced whistling, and continued on his way. Occasionally his hand would wander to the left-hand pocket of his coat, when, feeling the Professor's watch and chain and the note to the police, his face would irradiate joy. He *must* think, and, with Bindle, to think, it was necessary to remain still, which he dare not do for fear of arousing suspicion.

Presently he saw the lights of a coffee-stall, towards which he walked briskly. Over two sausages and some coffee he reviewed the situation, chaffed the proprietor, and treated to a meal the bedraggled remnants of what was once a woman, which he found hovering hungrily about the stall. When he eventually said "Good morning" to his host and guest, he had worked out his plan of campaign.

He walked in the direction of the police-station. Day was beginning to break. Seeing approaching a man who looked like a laborer, he quickened his pace to a run. As he came within a few yards of the man, he slackened his pace, then stopped abruptly.

"Where's the police-station, mate?" he inquired, panting as if with great exertion.

"The police-station?" repeated the man curiously. "Straight up the road, then third or fourth to the left, then—"

"Is it miles?" panted Bindle.

"'Bout 'arf a mile, not more. What's up, mate?" the man inquired.

"'Arf a mile, an' 'im bleeding to death! I got to fetch a doctor," Bindle continued. Then, as if with sudden inspiration, he thrust Professor Conti's letter into the astonished man's hands.

"In the name of the law, I command you to deliver this letter! I'll go for a doctor. Quick—it's burglary! 'Ere's a bob for yer trouble."

With that, Bindle sped back the way he had come, praying that no policeman might see him and give chase.

The man stood stupidly looking from the letter and the shilling in his hand to the retreating form of Bindle. After a moment's hesitation he pocketed the coin, and with a grumble in his throat and a fear in his heart if he disobey the law's command, he turned and slowly made his way to the police-station.

## V

WHEN Professor Conti awakened on the morning of the burglary, he was horrified to find, from the medley of sounds without, produced by hooters and bells, that it was half-past eight. Jumping quickly out of bed, he shaved, washed and dressed with great expedition, and before half-past nine was in a telephone call-box ringing up the police. On learning that his note had been duly delivered, he smiled his satisfaction into the telephone mouthpiece. Fortunately he was known to the sergeant who answered him, having recently given his services at an entertainment organized by the local police. After some difficulty he arranged that the charge should be taken through the telephone, although a most irregular proceeding.

"He's givin' us a lot of trouble, sir—talking of having been given the note, and about a burglary and attempted murder," volunteered the sergeant.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the Professor.

"Ha, ha, ha!" echoed the sergeant, and they rang off.

In spite of his laugh, the Professor was a little puzzled by the sergeant's words. The man should still be under control. However, he rea-

soned, the fellow was caught, and he had other and more important things to occupy his mind. Hailing a passing taxi, he drove to the offices of *The Evening Mail*. Sending up his card with the words "Important News" written upon it, he gained immediate access to the editor. Within ten minutes the story of the hypnotized burglar was being dictated by the editor himself to relays of shorthand writers. The police had confirmed, on the telephone, the story of a man having given himself up, and the whole adventure was, in the argot of Fleet Street, "hot stuff."

By half past eleven the papers were selling in the streets, and the Professor was on his way to the police-court. He had been told the case would not come on before twelve. As his taxi threaded its way jerkily westward, he caught glimpses of the placard of the noon edition of *The Evening Mail*, bearing such sensational lines as "The Hypnotized Burglar," "Professor Conti and the Burglar," "An Amazing Capture," "Burglar Hypnotized." He smiled pleasantly as he pictured his reception that evening, as an extra turn, at one of the big music-halls. He fell to speculating as to how much he should demand and to which manager he should offer his services. "The Napoleon of Mesmerists" was the title he had decided to adopt. Again the Professor smiled amiably as he thought of the three columns of description with headlines in *The Evening Mail*. He had indeed achieved success.

## VI

THE drowsy atmosphere of the West London Police Court oppressed even the prisoners. They came and heard and departed; protagonists for a few minutes in a drama, then oblivion. The magis-

trate was cross, the clerk husky and the police anxiously deferential, for one of their number had that morning been severely censured for being unable to discriminate between the effects upon the human frame of laudanum and whisky. Nobody was interested—there was nothing to be interested in—and there was less oxygen than usual in the court, as the magistrate had a cold. It was a miserable business, this detection and punishing of crime.

"Twenty shillings costs, seven days," snuffled the presiding genius. A piece of human flotsam faced about and disappeared. Another name was called. The sergeant in charge of the new case cleared his throat. The magistrate lifted his handkerchief to his nose, the clerk removed his spectacles to wipe them, when something bounded into the dock, drawing up two other somethings behind it.

The magistrate paused, his handkerchief held to his nose, the clerk dropped his spectacles, the three reporters became eagerly alert—in short, the whole court awakened simultaneously from its apathy to the knowledge that this was a dramatic moment.

In the dock stood a medium-sized man with nondescript features, a thin black moustache, iron-gray hair and disheveled clothing. Each side of him stood a constable gripping an arm—they were the somethings that had followed him into the dock. For a moment the prisoner, who seemed to radiate indignation, looked about him, his breath coming in short, passionate sobs. The clerk stooped to pick up his glasses, the magistrate blew his nose violently to gain time, the reporters prepared to take notes. Then the storm burst.

"You shall pay for this, all of yer!" shouted the man in the dock, jerking his head forward to emphasize his words, his arms being firmly



held straight to his sides. "Me a burglar—me, Jem Willins?" he sobbed.

"Silence in court!" droned the clerk, who, having found his glasses, now began to read the charge-sheet, detailing how the prisoner had burglariously entered No. 13, Audrey Mansions, Queen's Club, in the early hours of that morning. He was accustomed and indifferent to passionate protests from the dock.

The prisoner breathed heavily. The clerk was detailing how he had awakened the occupant of the premises by lifting his gold watch from the table beside the bed. At this juncture the prisoner burst out again.

"It's a lie, it's a lie, an' you all know it! It's a plot! I'm—I'm—" He became inarticulate, sobs of impotent rage shaking his whole body, and the tears streaming down his face.

At that moment Professor Sylvanus Conti entered the court, smiling and alert. He looked quickly toward the dock to see if his case had come on, and was relieved to find that his last night's visitor was not there. He feared being late. The magistrate cleared his throat and addressed the prisoner—

"You are harming your case by this exhibition. If a mistake has been made, you have nothing to fear; but if you continue these interruptions, I shall have to send you back to the cells while your case is heard."

Turning to the officer in charge of the case, he inquired—

"Is the prosecutor present?"

The sergeant looked round, and, seeing Professor Conti, replied that he was.

"Let him be sworn," ordered the magistrate.

To his intense astonishment, Professor Conti heard his name called. Thoroughly bewildered, he walked in the direction in which people seemed

to expect him to walk. He took the oath, with his eyes fixed, as if he were fascinated, upon the pathetic figure in the dock. Suddenly he became aware that the man was addressing him.

"Did I do it—did I?" he asked brokenly.

"Silence in court!" called the clerk.

Suddenly the full horror of the situation dawned upon the Professor. He broke out in a cold sweat as he stood petrified in the witness-box. Somehow or other his plan had miscarried. He looked round him. Instinctively he thought of flight. He felt that *he* was the culprit, the passionate, eager creature in the dock his accuser.

"Am I the man?" he heard the prisoner persisting. "*Am I?*"

"N-no," he faltered in a voice he would have sworn was not his own.

"You say that the prisoner is not the man who entered your flat during the early hours of this morning?" questioned the magistrate.

"No, sir, he is not," replied Conti wearily, miserably. What had happened? Was he a failure?

"Please explain what happened," ordered the magistrate. Conti did so. He told how he had been awakened, and how he conceived the idea of hypnotizing the burglar and making him give himself up to the police.

The prisoner was then sworn, and he related how he had been commanded, in the name of the law, to deliver the note at the police-station; how he had done so, and had been promptly arrested; how he had protested his innocence, but without result.

The Professor listened to the story in amazement, and to the subsequent remarks of the magistrate upon quack practices and police methods. He did not, however, realize the full horror of the catastrophe that had befallen him until five minutes after

leaving the court, when he encountered a news-vendor displaying a placard of *The Evening Mail* bearing the words: "Professor Conti's Great Hypnotic Feat. Capture of a Burglar." He then saw that he had lost his reputation, his belief in his own powers, his living and about fifty pounds' worth of property.

That evening Joseph Bindle sat at home in his favorite chair, reading with great relish *The Evening Post's* account of "The Great Hypnotic Fiasco." Being at bitter enmity with *The Evening Mail*, the *Post* had given rein to its sense of the ludicrous. Puffing contentedly at a twopenny cigar, Bindle enjoyed to the full the story so ably presented; but nothing

gave him so much pleasure as the magistrate's closing words. He read them for the fourth time—

"Professor Conti sought advertisement; he has got it. Unfortunately for him, he met a man cleverer than himself, one, too, who is something of a humorist." (Bindle smiled appreciatively.) "The conduct of the police in this case is reprehensible to a degree, and they owe it to the public to bring the real culprit to justice."

With great deliberation Bindle removed his cigar from his mouth, placed the forefinger of his right hand to the side of his nose and winked. Then he rose, put on his coat, and went out to fetch the supper beer.

## SINK DRAINS AND OPERA

**"D**O you know why the water in your bathroom sink doesn't overflow and run down through the floor and spoil your ceiling?

The answer isn't, "Because I don't let it," but because there's a hole in one side near the top which lets out the water faster than it can run in.

Oscar Hammerstein did it!

Oscar of the eternal silk tile, the grand opera impresario, the builder of many opera houses and maker of many operatic stars.

That he should give thought to so prosaic a thing as a sink may seem impossible, but Mr. Hammerstein's pet amusement and hobby isn't building opera houses or arranging operatic seasons, it is puttering away in a little dingy workshop at all sorts of inventions. A part of the present-day cigar-making machines is one of his inventions. He invented that simple sink drain for overflow. The water in the sink in his little office, years ago, ran over and down into a tailor shop. He didn't have money enough to pay for the damaged clothes. He did have brains enough to prevent his sink from overflowing again because he made the top drain and piped it off. A plumber saw it and gave him \$2,500 for the idea.

Just now Mr. Hammerstein is working away at several inventions which he hopes to perfect. He says he's having more fun doing this than he ever had in the grand opera business.

# FROM THE NOTEBOOK OF A SCOTTISH SCHOOLMASTER

Banishing Rules and Regulations, and Developing Personality—  
Being a Human Being—Is Robert Burns Greater Than  
Harry Lauder?—The Matter of Sex Education

By A. S. NEILL

*[The author of the following notes has radical views on pedagogy. He should be read by every teacher in this country and by every parent, present or prospective. Whether or not we agree with all of his views and theories, no one will deny the soundness of his attitude toward the "young idea" and the inspiration of his notes on the subject. The author's phraseology has been left intact, for we believe that our readers will find an added interest in the Scotch terms he uses.—THE EDITOR.]*

I HAVE been thinking about discipline over night. I have seen a headmaster who insisted on what he called perfect discipline. His bairns sat still all day. A movement foreshadowed the strap. Every child jumped up at the word of command. He had a very quiet life.

I must confess that I am an atrociously bad disciplinarian. To-day Violet Brown began to sing "Tipperary" to herself when I was marking the registers. I looked up and said: "Why the happiness this morning?" and she blushed and grinned. I am a poor disciplinarian.

I find that normally I am very slack; I don't mind if they talk or not. Indeed, if the hum of conversation stops, I feel that something has happened and I invariably look towards the door to see whether an Inspector has arrived.

I find that I am almost a good disciplinarian when my liver is bad; I demand silent then . . . but I fear I do not get it, and I generally laugh. The only discipline I ask for usually is the discipline that interest draws. If a boy whets his pencil while I

am describing the events that led to the Great Rebellion, I sidetrack him on the topic of rabbits . . . and I generally make him sit up. I know that I am teaching badly if the class is loafing, and I am honest enough in my saner moments not to blame the bairns.

I do not like strict discipline, for I do believe that a child should have as much freedom as possible. I want a bairn to be human, and I try to be human myself. I walk to school each morning with my briar between my lips, and if the fill is not smoked, I stand and watch the boys play. I would kiss my wife in my classroom, but . . . I do not have a wife. A wee lassie stopped me on the way to school this morning, and she pushed a very sticky sweetie into my hand. I took my pipe from my mouth and ate the sweetie—and I asked for another; she was highly delighted.

Discipline, to me, means a pose on the part of the teacher. It makes him very remote; it lends him dignity. Dignity is a thing I abominate. I suppose the bishop is dignified be-

cause he wants to show that there is a real difference between his salaried self and the underpaid curate. Why should I be dignified before my bairns? (There was a dandy slide on the road to-day. I gave them half an hour's extra play this morning, and I slid all the time. My assistants are adepts at the game.)

But discipline is necessary; there are men known as Inspectors. And Johnny must be flogged if he does not attend to the lesson. He must know the rivers of Russia. After all, why should he? I don't know them, and I don't miss the knowledge. I couldn't tell you the capital of New Zealand . . . is it Wellington? or Auckland? I don't know; all I know is that I could find out if I wanted to.

I do not blame Inspectors. Some of them are men with what I would call vision. I had the Chief Inspector of the district in the other day, and I enjoyed his visit. He has a fine taste in poetry, and a sense of humor.

The Scotch Education Department is iniquitous because it is a department; a department cannot have a sense of humor. And it is humor that makes a man decent and kind and human.

If the Scotch Education Department were to die suddenly I should suddenly become a worse disciplinarian than I am now. If Willie did not like Woodwork, I should say to him: "All right, Willie. Go and do what you do like, but take my advice and do some work; you will enjoy your football all the better for it."

I believe in discipline, but it is self-discipline that I believe in. I think I can say that I never learned anything by being forced to learn it, but I may be wrong. I was forced to learn the Shorter Catechism, and to-day I hate the sight of it. I read the other day in Barrie's "Sentimen-

tal Tommy" that its meaning comes to one long afterwards and at a time when one is most in need of it. I confess that the time has not come for me; it will never come, for I don't remember two lines of the Catechism.

It is a fallacy that the nastiest medicines are the most efficacious; Epsom Salts are not more beneficial than Syrup of Figs.

A thought! . . . If I believe in self-discipline, why not persuade Willie that Woodwork is good for him as a self-discipline? Because it isn't my job. If Willie dislikes chisels he will always dislike them. What I might do is this: tell him to persevere with his chisels so that he might cut himself badly. Then he might discover that his true vocation is bandaging, and straightway go in for medicine.

Would Willie run away and play at horses if I told him to do what he liked best? I do not think so. He likes school, and I think he likes me. I think he would try to please me if he could.

**W**HEN I speak kindly to a bairn I sometimes ask myself what I mean (for I try to find out my motives). Do I want the child to think kindly of me? Do I try to be popular? Am I after the delightful joy of being loved? Am I merely being humanly brotherly and kind?

I have tried to analyze my motives, and I really think that there is a little of each motive. I want to be loved; I want the bairn to think kindly of me. But in the main I think that my chief desire is to make the bairn happy. No man, no woman, has the right to make the skies cloudy for a bairn; it is the sin against the Holy Ghost.

I once had an experience in teaching. A boy was dour and unlovable and rebellious and disobedient. I



tried all ways—I regret to say I tried the tawse. I was inexperienced at the time, yet I hit upon the right way. One day I found he had a decided talent for drawing. I brought down some of my pen-and-ink sketches and showed him them. I gave him pictures to copy, and his interest in art grew. I won him over by interesting myself in him. He discovered that I was only human after all.

Only human! . . . when our scholars discover that we are only human, then they like us, and then they listen to us.

I see the fingers of my tawse hanging out of my desk. They seem to be accusing fingers. My ideals are all right, but . . . I whacked Tom Wilkie to-night. At three o'clock he bled Dave Tosh's nose, and because Dave was the smaller I whacked Tom. Yet I did not feel angry; I regret to say that I whacked Tom because I could see that Dave expected me to do it, and I hate to disappoint a bairn. If Dave had been his size, I know that I should have ignored their battle.

**I** HEARD a blackie this morning as I went to school, and when I came near to the playground I heard the girls singing. And I realized that Lenten was come with love to town.

The game was a jingaring, and Violet Brown was in the center.

The wind and the wind and the wind  
blows high,

The wind comes pattering from the  
sky.

Violet Brown says she'll die  
For the lad with the rolling eye.  
She is handsome, she is pretty,  
She is the girl of the golden city;  
She is counted one, two, three;  
Oh, I wonder who he'll be.  
Willie Craig he loves her. . . .

My own early experience told me that Willie wasn't far off. Yes, there he was at the same old game. When Vi entered the ring Willie began to hammer Geordie Steel with his bonnet. But I could see Violet watch him with a corner of her eye, and I am quite sure that she was aware that the exertion of hammering Geordie did not account for Willie's burning cheeks.

Then Katie Farmer entered the ring . . . and Tom Dixon at once became the hammerer of Geordie.

Poor wee Geordie! I know that he loves Katie himself, and I know that between blows he is listening for the fatal "Tom Dixon says he loves her."

I re-arranged seats this morning, and Willie is now sitting behind his Vi, but Tom Dixon is not behind Katie. Poor despised Geordie is there, but I shall shift him to-morrow if he does not make the most of his chances.

**T**HIS morning Geordie passed a note over to Katie, then he sat all in a tremble. I saw Katie read it . . . and I saw her blush. I blew my nose violently, for I knew what was written on that sacred sheet; at least I thought I knew . . . "Dear Katie, will you be my lass? I will have you if you will have me—Geordie."

At minutes I listened for the name when Katie went into the ring. It was "Tom Dixon" again. I blew my whistle and stopped the game.

At dinner-time I looked out at the window, and rejoiced to see poor Geordie hammering Tom Dixon. I opened the window and listened. Katie was in the ring again, and I almost shouted "Hurrah!" when I heard the words, "Geordie Steel says he loves her." But I placed Tom Dixon behind Katie in the afternoon;

I felt that I had treated poor Tom with injustice.

To-night I tried to tackle Form 9b, but I could not concentrate. But it wasn't Violet and Katie that I was thinking of; I was thinking of the Violets and Katies I wrote "noties" to many years ago. I fear I am a bit of a sentimentalist, yet . . . why the devil shouldn't I be?

**I** WISH I were a musician. If I could play the piano I should spend each Friday afternoon playing to my bairns. I should give them "Alexander's Ragtime Band" and "Hitchy Coo"; then I should play them a Liszt rhapsody and a Chopin waltz.

Would they understand and appreciate? Who knows what raptures great music might bring to a country child?

The village blacksmith was fiddling at a dance in the hall last night. "Aw learnt the fiddle in a week," he told me. I believed him.

What effect would Ysaye have on a village audience? The divine melody would make them sit up at first, and, I think, some of them might begin to see pictures. If only I could bring Ysaye and Pachmann to this village! What an experiment! I think that if I were a Melba or an Ysaye I should say to myself: "I have had enough of money and admiration; I shall go round the villages on an errand of mercy."

The great, they say, begin in the village hall and end in Albert Hall. The really great would begin and end in the village hall.

**A** VERY young calf had managed to get into the playground this morning, and when I arrived I found Peter Smith hitting it viciously over the nose with a stick. I said nothing. I read the war news as usual. Then I addressed the bairns.

"What would you do to the Germans who committed atrocities in Belgium?" I asked. Peter's hand went up with the others.

"Well, Peter?"

"Please, sir, shoot them."

"Cruelty should be punished, eh?" I said.

"Yes, sir."

"Then come here, you dirty dog!" I cried, and I whacked Peter with a fierce joy.

I have often wondered at the strain of cruelty that is so often found in boys. The evolutionists must be right: the young always tend to resemble their remote ancestors. In a boy there is much of the brute. I have seen a boy cut off the heads of a nest of young sparrows; I wanted to hit him . . . but he was bigger than I. This morning I was bigger than Peter; hence I do not take any credit to myself for welting him.

I can see that cruelty does not disappear with youth. I confess to a feeling of unholy joy in leathering Peter, but I think that it was caused by a real indignation.

What made Peter hurt the poor wee thing I cannot tell. I am inclined to think that he acted subconsciously; he was being the elemental hunter, and he did not realize that he was giving pain. I ought to have talked to him, to have <sup>made</sup> him realize. But I became elemental also; I punished with no definite motive . . . and I would do it again.

**I** FIND that my bairns have a genuine love for poetry. To-day I read them Tennyson's "Lady of Shalott"; then I read them "The May Queen." I asked them which was better, and most of them preferred "The Lady of Shalott." I asked for reasons, and Margaret Steel said that the one was strange and mysterious, while the other told of an ordinary death-bed. The whole

class seemed to be delighted when I called "The May Queen" a silly, mawkish piece of sentimentality.

I have made them learn many pieces from Stevenson's "A Child's Garden of Verses," and they love the rhythm of such pieces as "The Shadow March."

Another poem that they love is "Helen of Kirkconnell"; I asked which stanza was the best, and they all agreed on this beautifully simple one:

O, Helen fair, beyond compare,  
I'll make a garland o' thy hair;  
Shall bind my heart for evermair  
Until the day I dee.

I believe in reading out a long poem and then asking them to memorize a few verses. I did this with "The Ancient Mariner." Long poems are an abomination to children; to ask them to commit to memory a piece like Gray's *Elegy* is unkind.

I have given them the first verse of Francis Thompson's "The Hound of Heaven." I did not expect them to understand it; my idea was to test their power of appreciating sound. Great music might convey something to rustics, but great poetry cannot convey much. Still, I try to lead them to the greater poetry. I wrote on the board a verse of "Little Jim" and a verse of "La Belle Dame sans Merci," and I think I managed to give them an inkling of what is good and what is bad verse.

I begin to think that country children should learn ballads. There is a beauty about the old ballads that even children can catch; it is the beauty of a sweet simplicity. When I think of the orchestration of Swinburne, I think of the music of the ballads as of a flute playing. And I know that orchestration would be lost on country folk.

I hate the poems that crowd the average schoolbook . . . "Little

Jim," "We Are Seven," "Lucy Gray," "The Wreck of the *Hesperus*," "The Boy Stood on the Burning Deck," and all the rest of them. I want to select the best of the Cavalier lyrics' works, the songs from the old collections like Davison's *Poetical Rhapsody* and England's *Helicon*, the lyrics from the Elizabethan dramatists. I want to look through moderns like William Watson, Robert Bridges, George Meredith, Thomas Hardy, Henley, Dowson, Abercrombie, William Wilfred Gibson . . . there must be many charming pieces that bairns would enjoy.

I read out the old "Tales of Gamelyn" the other day, and the queer rhythm and language seemed to interest the class.

THE theorist is a lazy man. MacMurray down the road at Marikton School is a hard worker; he never theorizes about education. He grinds away at his history and geography, and I don't suppose he likes geography any more than I do. I expect that he gives a thorough lesson on Canada, its exports and so on. I do not; I am too lazy to read up the subject. My theory says to me: "You are able to think fairly well, and a knowledge of the amount of square miles in Manitoba would not help you to think as brightly as H. G. Wells. So, why learn up stuff that you can get in a dictionary any day?" And I teach on this principle.

At the same time I am aware that facts must precede theories in education. You cannot have a theory on, say, the Marriage Laws, unless you know what these laws are. However, I do try to distinguish between facts and facts. To a child (as to me), the fact that Canada grows wheat is of less importance than the fact that if you walk down the street

in Winnipeg in mid-winter, you may have your ears frost-bitten.

The only information I know about Japan consists of a few interesting facts I got from a lecture by Arthur Diosy. I don't know what things are manufactured in Tokio, but I know that a Jap almost boils himself when he takes a bath in the morning. I find that I am much more interested in humanity than in materials, and I know that the bairns are like me in this.

A West African came to the school the other day, and asked me to allow him to tell (for a consideration) the story of his home life. When I discovered that he did not mean his own private home life I gladly gave him permission. He talked for half-an-hour about the habits of his home, the native schools, the dress of the children (I almost blushed at this part, but I was relieved to find that they do dress after all): then he sang the native version of "Mary had a little Lamb" (great applause).

The lecture was first-rate; and, in my lazy—I mean my theoretical moments—I squint down the road in hopes that an itinerant Chinaman will come along. I would have a colored band of geographers employed by the Department.

**T**O-NIGHT I sat down on a desk and lit my pipe. Margaret Steel and Lizzie Buchan were tidying up the room. Margaret looked at me thoughtfully for a second.

"Please, sir, why do you smoke?" she said.

"I really don't know, Margaret," I said. "Bad habit, I suppose . . . just like writing notes to boys."

She suddenly became feverishly anxious to pick up the stray papers.

"I wonder," I mused, "whether they do it in the same old way. How

do they do it, Margaret?" She dived after a piece of paper.

"I used to write them myself," I said. Margaret looked up quickly.

"You!" she gasped.

"I am not so old," I said hastily.

"Please, sir, I didn't mean that," she explained in confusion.

"You did, you wee bissom," I chuckled.

"Please, sir," she said awkwardly, "why—why are you not—not—m-married?" I rose and took up my hat.

**I** WAS re-reading "An Enemy of the People" last night, and the thought suddenly came to me: "Would my bairns understand it?" This morning I cut out Bible instruction and read them the first act. I then questioned them, and found to my delight that they recognized *Dr. Stockmann* as a better man than his groveling brother *Peter*.

I must re-read Shaw's "Widowers' Houses"; I fancy that children might find much thought in it. It is one of his "Unpleasant Plays," but I see no reason for keeping the unlovely things from bairns. I do not believe in frightening them with tales of murder and ghosts. Every human being has something of the gruesome in his composition; the murder cases are the most popular readings in our press. I want to direct this innate desire for gruesome things to the realizing of the most gruesome things in the world—the grinding of soul and body in order to gain profits, the misery of poverty and cold, the weariness of toil. If our press really wants to make its readers shudder, why does it not publish long accounts of infant mortality in the slums, of ginfed bairns, of back-doors used as fuel, of phthysical girls straining their eyes over seams? I know why the press ignores these things, the



public does not want to think of them. If the public wanted such stories every capitalist owner of a newspaper would supply them, grudgingly, but with a stern resolve to get dividends. To-day the papers are mostly run for the rich and their parasites. The only way in which 'Enery Smith can get his photograph into the papers is by jumping on Mrs. 'Enery Smith until she expires. I wonder that no criminologist has tried to prove that publicity is the greatest incentive to crime.

To-day I have scrapped somebody's Rural Arithmetic. It is full of sums of the How-much-will-it-take-to-paper-a-room? type. This cursed utilitarianism in education riles me. Who wants to know what it will take to paper a room? Personally I should call in the painter, and take my meals on the parlor piano for a day or two. Anyway, why this suspicion of the poor painter? Is he worse than other tradesmen? If we must have a utilitarian arithmetic then I want to see a book that will tell me if the watchmaker is a liar when he tells me that the mainspring of my watch is broken. I want to see sums like this:—How long will a plumber take to lay a ten-foot pipe if father can do it at the rate of a yard in three minutes? (Ans., three days).

To me Arithmetic is an art not a science. I do not know a single rule; I must always go back to first principles. I love catch questions, questions that will make a bairn think all the time. Inspectors' Tests give but little scope for the Art of Arithmetic; they are usually poor peddling things that smell strongly of materialism. In other words, they appeal to the mechanical part of a bairn's brain instead of to the imagination. I want to see a test that will include a sum like this:— $23.4 \times .065 \times 54.678 \times 0$ . The cram will start

in to multiply out; the imaginative bairn will glance along and see the nought and will at once spot that the answer is zero.

I HAVE been re-reading Shaw's remarks on "Sex in Education." I cannot see that he has anything very illuminating to say on the subject; for that matter no one has. Most of us realize that something is wrong with our views on sex. The present attitude of education is to ignore sex, and the result is that sex remains a conspiracy of silence. The ideal some of us have is to raise sex to its proper position as a wondrous beautiful thing. To-day we try to convey to bairns that birth is a disgrace to humanity.

The problem before me comes to this: How can I bring my bairns to take a rational elemental view of sex instead of a conventional hypocritical one? How can I convey to them the realization that our virtue is mostly cowardice, that our sex morality is founded on mere respectability? (It is the easiest thing in the world to be virtuous in Padanarum; it is not so easy to be a saint in Oxford Street. Not because Oxford Street has more temptation, but because nobody knows you there.)

In reality I can do nothing. If I mentioned sex in school I should be dismissed at once. But if a philanthropist would come along and offer me a private school to run as I pleased, then I should introduce sex into my scheme of education. Bairns would be encouraged to believe in the stork theory of birth until they reached the age of nine. At that age they would get the naked truth.

A friend of mine, one of the cleverest men I know, and his wife, a wise woman, resolved to tell their children anything they asked. The

eldest, a girl of four, asked one day where she came from. They told her, and she showed no surprise. But I would begin at nine chiefly because the stork story is so delightful that it would be cruel to deprive a bairn of it altogether. Yet, after all, the stork story is all the more charming when you know the bald truth.

Well, at the age of nine my bairns would be taken in hand by a doctor. They would learn that modesty is mainly an accidental result of the invention of clothes. They would gradually come to look upon sex as a normal fact of life; in short, they would recognize it as a healthy thing.

Shaw is right in saying that children must get the truth from a teacher, because parents find a natural shyness in mentioning sex to their children. But I think the next generation of parents will have a better perspective; shyness will almost disappear. The bairns must be told; of that there is no doubt. The present evasion and deceit lead to the dirtiness which constitutes the sex education of boys and girls.

The great drawback to a frank education on sex matters is the disgusting fact that most grown-up people persist in associating sex with sin. The phrase "born in sin" is still applied to an illegitimate child. When I think of the damnable cruelty of virtuous married women to a girl who has had a child I want to change the phrase into "born into sin."

**N**O grammar," says the Code, "should be taught until written composition begins." I like that, but I should re-write it thus: "No grammar should be taught this side of the Styx."

Grammar is always changing, and the grammar of yesterday is

scrapped to-day. A child requires to know how to speak and how to write correctly. I can write passably well, and when I write I do not need to know whether a word is an adjective or an adverb, whether a clause is a noun clause or an adverbial clause of time modifying a certain verb . . . or is it a noun? Society ladies speak grammatically (I am told), and I'm quite sure that not three people in the Row could tell me whether a word is a verb or an adverb (I shouldn't care to ask). The fact that I really could tell what each word is makes absolutely no difference to me. A middle-class boy of five will know that the sentence "I and nurse is going to the Pictures" is wrong.

But I must confess that grammar has influenced me in one way. I know I should say "Whom did you see?" but I always say "Who did you see?" And I used to try not to split my infinitives . . . until I found out that you can't split an infinitive; "to" has nothing to do with the infinitive anyway.

I want to abolish the terms Subject, Predicate, Object, Extension, Noun, Verb, etc. I fancy we could get along very well without them. Difficulties might arise in learning a foreign tongue. I don't know anything about foreign tongues; all I know is the Greek alphabet and a line of Homer, and the fact that all Gaul is divided into three parts. Yet I imagine that one could learn French or German as a child learns a language.

Good speaking and writing mean the correct use of idiom, and idiom is the best phrasing of the best people—best according to our standards at the present time.

I have heard Parsing and Analysis defended on the ground of their being an exercise in reasoning. I admit that they do require reasoning, but I hold that the time would be

better spent in Mathematics. I hope to take my senior pupils through the first and third books of Euclid this summer. Personally, I can find much pleasure in stiff deduction, but I find nothing but intense weariness in an analysis of sentences. My theories on education are purely personal; if I don't like a thing I presume that my bairns dislike it. And the strange thing is that my presumptions are nearly always right.

"PLEASE, sir, Willie Smith was swearing." Thus little Maggie Shepherd to me to-day.

I always fear this complaint, for what can I do? I can't very well ask Maggie what he said, and if he wasn't swearing . . . well, his word is as good as Maggie's. I can summon witnesses, but bairns have but the haziest notion of what swearing is. (For that matter so do I.) If a boy shoves his fingers to his nose . . . "Please, sir, he swore!"

I try to be a just man, and . . . well, I was bunkered at the ninth hole on Saturday, and I dismissed Willie Smith—without an admonition. But I am worried to-night, for I can't recollect whether Willie has ever caddied for me; I have a shrewd suspicion that he has.

I TRIED an experiment to-day. I gave an exam. in History, and each pupil was allowed to use a textbook. The best one was first, she knew what to select. I deprecate the usual exam. system of allotting a prescribed time to each paper. Blyth Webster, the racy young lecturer in English in Edinburgh University, used to allow us an indefinite time for our old English papers. I generally required a half hour to give him all I knew about Old English, but I believe that some students sat for five hours. Students write

and think at different rates, and the time limit is always unjust.

I wish the Department would allow me to set the Higher Grade Leavings English papers for once. My paper would certainly include the following:—

"If Shakespeare came back to earth what do you think would be his opinion of Women's Suffrage (refer to 'The Taming of the Shrew') Home Rule, Sweated Labor, the Kaiser?"

"Have you read any Utopia? If not, it doesn't matter; write one of your own. (Note . . . a Utopia is an ideal country—this side the grave.)"

"Discuss Spenser's idea of chivalry, and state what you think would be his opinion on table-manners, Soho, or any slum you know, 'the Present State of Ireland.'"

"What would Burns have thought of the prevalence of the kilt among the Semitic inhabitants of Scotland? Is Burns greater than Harry Lauder? Tell me why you think he isn't or is."

"Discuss the following humorists and alleged humorists:—Dickens, Jacobs, Lauder, Jerome, Leacock, Storer, Clouston, Wells (in 'Kipps' and 'Mr. Polly'), Locke (in 'Septimus'), Bennett (in 'The Card'), Mark Twain, your class teacher, the average magistrate."

"If you have not read any humor at all, write a humorous dialogue between a brick and the mongrel dog it came in contact with."

I hold that my exam. paper would discover any genius knocking about in ignorance of his or her powers. I intend to offer it to the Department . . . when I am out of the profession.

I am delighted with my sketching results. We go out every Wednesday and Friday afternoon, and many bairns are giving me good work. We

usually end up with races or wading in the sea. There was much wonder when first they saw my bare feet, but now they take my feet for granted.

Modesty is strong here. The other day the big girls came to me and asked if they could come to school slipshod.

"You can come in your nighties for all I care," I said, and they gasped.

We sit outside all day now. My classes take books and wander away down the road and lie on the banks. When I want them I call with the bugle. Each class has a "regimental call" and they come promptly. They most of them sit down separately, but the chatters like to sit together.

I force no bairn to learn in my school. The few who dislike books and lessons sit up when I talk to the class. The slackers are not always the most ignorant.

I am beginning to compliment myself on having a good temper. For the past six weeks I have left the manual room open at playtime and the boys have made many toys. But they have made a woeful mess of the cutting tools. It is trying to find that your favorite plane has been cracked by a boy who has extreme theories on the fixing of plane irons. But it is very comforting to know that the School Board will have to pay for the damage. Yes, my temper is excellent.

**T**O-NIGHT MacMurray invited me down to meet his former head, Simpson, a big man in the educational institute, and a likely President next year. Mac introduced me as "a chap with theories on education; doesn't care a rap for inspectors and abominates discipline."

Simpson looked me over; then he grunted.

"You'll grow out of that, young man," he said sagely.

I laughed.

"That's what I'm afraid of," I said, "I fear that the continual holding of my nose to the grindstone will destroy my perspective."

"Experience," I cried, "is, or at least, should be one of Oscar Wilde's Seven Deadly Virtues. The experienced man is the chap who funks doing a thing because he's had his fingers burned. 'Tis experience that makes cowards of us all."

"Of course," said Simpson, "you're joking. It stands to reason that I, for instance, with a thirty-four years' experience of teaching know more about education than you do, if you don't mind my saying so."

"Man, I was teaching laddies before your father and mother met," he added.

"If you saw a lad and a lass making love would you arrange that he should sit near her?"

"Good gracious, no!" he cried. "What has that got to do with the subject?"

"But why not give them chances to spoon?" I asked.

"Why not? If a teacher encouraged that sort of thing, why, it might lead to anything!"

"Exactly," I said, "experience tells you that you have to do all you can to preserve the morals of the bairns?"

"I could give you instances—"

"I don't want them particularly," I interrupted. "My main point is that experience has made you a funk. Pass the baccy, Mac."

"Mean to tell me that's how you teach?" cried Simpson. "How in all the world do you do for discipline?"

"I do without it."

"My goodness! that's the limit! May I ask why you do without it?"

"It is a purely personal matter," I answered. "I don't want anyone



to lay down definite rules for me, and I refuse to lay down definite rules of conduct for my bairns."

"But how in all the earth do you get any work done?"

"Work," I said, "is an over-rated thing, just as knowledge is over-rated."

"Nonsense," said Simpson.

"All right," I remarked mildly, "if knowledge is so important, why is a university professor usually a talker of platitudes? Why is the average medallist at a university a man of tenth-rate ideas?"

"Then our Scotch education is all in vain?"

"Speaking generally, it is."

I think it was at this stage that Simpson began to doubt my sanity.

"Young man," he said severely, "Some day you will realize that work and knowledge and discipline are of supreme importance. Look at the Germans!"

He waved his hand in the direction of the sideboard, and I looked round hastily.

"Look what Germany has done with work and knowledge and discipline!"

"Then why all this bother to crush a State that has all the virtues?" I asked diffidently.

"It isn't discipline we are trying to crush; it is the militarism."

"Good!" I cried. "I'm glad to hear it. That's what I want to do in Scotland; I want to crush the militarism in our schools, and, as most teachers call their militarism discipline, I curse discipline."

"That's all rubbish, you know," he said shortly.

"No, it isn't. If I leather a boy for making a mistake in a sum, I am no better than the Prussian officer who shoots a Belgian civilian for crossing the street. I am equally stupid and a bully."

"Then you allow carelessness to go unpunished?" he sneered.

"I do. You see I am a very careless devil myself. I'll swear that I left your garden gate open when I came in, Mac, and your hens will be all over the road."

Mac looked out at the window.

"They are!" he chuckled, and I laughed.

"You seem to think that slovenliness is a virtue," said Simpson with a faint smile.

"I don't, really, but I hold that it is a natural human quality."

"Are your pupils slovenly?" he asked.

"Lots of 'em are. You're born tidy or you aren't."

"When these boys go out to the workshop, what then? Will a joiner keep an apprentice who makes a slovenly job?"

"Ah!" I said, "you're talking about trade now. You evidently want our schools to turn out practical workmen. I don't. Mind you I'm quite willing to admit that a shoemaker who theorizes about leather is a public nuisance. Neatness and skill are necessary in practical manufacture, but I refuse to reduce education to the level of cobbling or coffin-making. I don't care how slovenly a boy is if he thinks."

"If he is slovenly he won't think," said Simpson.

I smiled.

"I think you are wrong. Personally, I am a very lazy man; I have my library all over the floor as a rule. Yet, though I am lazy physically I am not lazy mentally. I hold that the really lazy teacher is your "ring the bell at nine sharp" man; he hustles so much that he hasn't time to think. If you work hard all day you never have time to think."

Simpson laughed.

"Man, I'd like to see your school!"

"Why not? Come up to-morrow morning?" I said.

"First rate," he cried. "I'll be there at nine."

"Better not," I said with a smile, "or you'll have to wait for ten minutes."

HE arrived as I blew the "Fall in" on my bugle.

"You don't line them up and march them in?" he said.

"I used to, but I've given it up," I confessed. "To tell the truth I'm not enamored of straight lines."

We entered my classroom. Simpson stood looking sternly at my chattering family while I marked the registers.

"I couldn't tolerate this row," he said.

"It isn't so noisy as your golf club on a Saturday night, is it?" He smiled slightly.

Jim Burnet came out to my desk and lifted the *Glasgow Herald*, then he went out to the playground humming "On the Mississippi."

"What's the idea?" asked Simpson.

"He's the only boy who is keen on the war news," I explained.

Then Margaret Steel came out.

"Please, sir, I took 'The Four Feathers' home and my mother began to read them; she thinks she'll finish them by Sunday. Is anybody reading 'The Invisible Man'?"

I gave her the book, and she went out.

Then Tom MacIntosh came out and asked for the Manual Room key; he wanted to finish a boat he was making.

"Do you let them do as they like?" asked Simpson.

"In the upper forms," I replied.

Soon all the Supplementary and Qualifying pupils had found a novel and had gone out to the roadside.

I turned to give the other classes arithmetic.

Mary Wilson in the front seat held out a bag of sweets to me. I took one.

"Please, sir, would the gentleman like one, too?"

Simpson took one with the air of a man on holiday who doesn't care what sins he commits.

"I say," he whispered, "do you let them eat in school? There's a boy in the back seat eating nuts."

I fixed Ralph Ritchie with my eye.

"Ralph! If you throw any nutshells on that floor Mrs. Finlay will eat you."

"I'm pitting them in my pooch," he said.

"Good! Write down this sum."

"What are the others doing?" asked Simpson after a time.

"Margaret Steel and Violet Brown are reading," I said promptly. "Annie Dixon is playing fives on the sand, Jack White and Bob Tosh are most likely arguing about horses, but the other boys are reading; we'll go and see." And together we walked down the road.

Annie was playing fives all right, but Jack and Bob weren't discussing horses; they were reading "Chips."

"And the scamps haven't the decency to hide it when you appear!" cried Simpson.

"Haven't the fear," I corrected.

On the way back to the school he said: "It's all very pleasant and picnicky, but eating nuts and sweets in class!"

"Makes your right arm itch?" I suggested pleasantly.

"It does," he said with a short laugh. "Man, do you never get irritated?"

"Sometimes."

"Ah!" He looked relieved. "So the system isn't perfect."

"Good Heavens!" I cried, "what do you think I am? A saint from heaven? You surely don't imagine that a man with nerves and a temperament is always able to enter into the moods of bairns! I get ratty occasionally, but I generally blame myself." I sent a girl for my bugle and sounded the "Dismiss."

"What do you do now?"

I pulled out my pipe and baccy.

"Have a fill," I said.

TO-DAY I began to read Mary Johnston's "By Order of the Company" to my bairns. I love the story, and I love the style. It reminds me of Malory's style; she has his trick of running on in a breathless string of "ands." When I think of style I am forced to recollect the stylists I had to read at the university. There was Sir Thomas Browne and his "Urn Burial." What the devil is the use of people like Browne I don't know. He gives us word-music and imagery, I admit, but I don't want word-music and imagery from prose, I want ideas or a story. I can't think of one idea I got from Browne or Fisher or Ruskin, or any of the stylists, yet I have found many ideas in translations of Nietzsche and Ibsen. Style is the curse of English literature.

When I read Mary Johnston I forget all about words. I vaguely realize that she is using the right words all the time, but the story is the thing. When I read Browne I

fail to scrape together the faintest interest in burials; the organ music of his "Dead March" drowns everything else.

When a man writes too musically and ornately I always suspect him of having a paucity of ideas. If you have anything important to say you use plain language. The man who writes to the local paper complaining of "those itinerant denizens of the underworld yclept hawkers, who make the day hideous with raucous cries," is a pompous ass. Yet he is no worse than the average stylist in writing. I think it was G. K. Chesterton who said that a certain popular authoress said nothing because she believed in words. He might have applied the phrase to ninety per cent. of English writers.

Poetry cannot be changed. Substitute a word for "felicity" in the line: "Absent thee from felicity awhile" and you destroy the poetry. But I hold the prose should be able to stand translation. The prose that cannot stand it is the empty stuff produced by our Ruskins and our Brownes. Empty barrels always have made the most sound.

THERE must be something in style after all. I had this note from a mother this morning.

"Dear Sir:

"Please change Janet's seat for she brings home more than belongs to her."

I refuse to comment on this work of art.



# THE VIGIL OF LITTLE ANTONE

By OSCAR LEWIS

UNTIL the time when the long-vacillating finger of suspicion came to rest upon his small and habitually unkempt person, "Little Antone" was by all odds the most wholly satisfying copy kid that ever smeared ink-grimed fingers over the yellow copy paper in the *Sentinel* office.

He could not have been more than eleven or twelve when first he came to us, and he was very small for his age. Nelson, in the circulation department downstairs, who hires the copy boys—"promotes" them, rather, from the ranks of the news kids—brought him up into the local room early one afternoon while the staff were waiting their assignments, and with an all-inclusive sweep of the hand, introduced Antonio Christopher Columbus Ghardelli. The Columbus part of it, we learned afterwards, was Nelson's own invention, but the rest of the name really belonged to him.

He was thin and small—almost ridiculously so—and he had black hair and eyes, and a ready, self-confident smile that somehow didn't seem to fit in with the rest of him. He was undeniably bright, however, and quick to learn, and he settled into his niche so surely and easily that before the month was out the whole staff were rumpling his uncut mop of hair for him and calling him "Little Antone." And then Henshaw, the night city editor, took him away from us and put him to carrying copy between his own desk

and the composing room downstairs.

This was in late spring, and one night a month later, a big, exclusive political story disappeared from Henshaw's desk. No amount of searching could locate it, and, since it was late and Ratcliffe, who turned in the story, had gone home, we were forced to go to press without it.

It was hard luck, of course, and Henshaw, naturally, was furious; but the most of us thought little about the matter until the *Enquirer* came out that next morning with the identical story spread all over its front page, and copied almost word for word. This, of course, put a very different face on the matter, for it indicated a leak from the inside; something that we had never had to deal with before. The next weeks were very uncomfortable for all concerned.

The affair blew over finally, and things at the office had just about settled back once more into the old grind, when the same thing happened again. It was during one of the first hot spells of the year, I remember, and that night when Henshaw burst through the swinging door into the local room with the news, he was in his shirt sleeves, and his face was like a thunder cloud. The missing copy this time was merely routine stuff and of no particular importance. Yet, as Henshaw assured us, with rather more than his usual forcefulness, that did not alter the fact that it was gone, and that some-



one in the office was responsible for its disappearance.

The thing was repeated three or four times within the next month or so, and by midsummer half of us in the office had warped considerably under the strain and developed such a militant grouch that the rest were compelled in self-defense to do likewise. During those days, if anyone in the local room forgot himself so far as to laugh, the rest of us turned about in our chairs and glared him back to his senses. In short, the entire staff had developed an acute case of "nerves."

Even Little Antone showed evidences of the strain, though he tried manfully enough to smile it down. His loyalty to the paper was a fine thing to see, and often we pointed out to him stories of ours that the *Enquirer* had stolen, for it was good to watch him on such occasions and to see his small body positively swell up with wrath at sight of them.

Things went on much the same for another two weeks, and then, one scorching night in mid-August, the owner of the paper sent down a quiet tip of a big impending shake-up in the Police Department. It was an exclusive story, and one of the biggest of the season. Three or four of us labored over it all evening, and Henshaw was so anxious that the other papers shouldn't get hold of it that he decided to hold the story over until the city edition, so that they couldn't copy it from our earlier issues.

And then, a few moments before sending it down to the compositors, Henshaw stepped out of the office; when he returned the story was gone. We held up the presses while those of us who remained at the office rigged up a hasty substitute. But it made a poor showing that next day alongside the *Enquirer*; for they, with truly colossal nerve, had printed

our story without altering a single word. One of their pressmen told us afterwards that they had been running on their last edition for nearly twenty minutes when orders came down to kill the edition. They must have suppressed thousands of papers that morning, but when they started again, the police story was in, and they had scored what everybody accepted as a big beat.

When we came to work the next day we all noticed that Little Antone was gone, and that there was a new copy kid at Henshaw's desk.

That night the local room talked over the matter languidly as occasion presented itself. We idly wondered how Henshaw had come to find the leak, agreed that it was too bad about the kid; and then yawned and proceeded to forget all about it.

But we had not heard the last of Little Antone. The following week Henshaw shifted me to night police and a few nights later I was coming up from the Hall of Justice, heading for the office to turn in my final copy before going home, and as I crossed the little three-cornered park opposite the *Sentinel* building, one of the indistinct figures dotting the sprawling row of benches that lined the walk caught my attention.

There was something about the sagging, blurred outlines of the tiny figure that seemed, even in the dark, very familiar. And the next moment I knew that it was Little Antone. He sat facing the old red column of the *Sentinel* building, and by an arc light over in a corner of the park I could see that he was looking up at the lighted windows of the editorial department on the seventh floor. I caught a fleeting glimpse of his face, and it was of the same discouraged cast as was his figure. It was clear that Little Antone knew why he had been let out, and that he was taking it badly.

I suppose that I stopped unconsciously, for Little Antone turned about. He must have recognized me, and he drew his eyes away suddenly and settled far back on the bench, seeming to retire within himself to such a remote distance that I gave up the idea of questioning him. It was long past midnight, and as I passed on I wondered what he could have been doing.

The next night he was there again, and the next, and the next; and I got into the habit of looking for the dark shadow of him as I passed each night on my way up to the office. He was always there, sitting quietly in the dark by himself, and looking always at the old red building across the street.

Some of the others in the office came to notice him, too, and before many days had passed, the whole staff knew of the strange vigil of Little Antone. Miss Blake, the little blonde assistant to the society editor, tried one night to speak to him, but no sooner had she paused than he was over the back of his bench and off into the shrubs beyond for all the world like a frightened rabbit. After that we made no attempt to disturb him, though I, for one, confess that I couldn't get the thought of him from my mind, and more than once I stood in the shadow of the magnolia trees across the park trying to puzzle out what he was up to. Of course, I learned nothing for he seldom even stirred, and after a few moments I'd begin to lose patience. I never thought to marvel at his.

I shall never forget the night that Little Antone came back to us again at the office. We had had an unusually torrid August that year and the night when he burst in upon us was the most brazenly severe of that whole suffocating month. We had stripped off coats and collars, and with sleeves rolled up, were digging

away, hating the very touch of sweaty fingers on the hot typewriter keys. Every window in the place was wide open to catch the steady but hot and depressing breeze that came dragging in to us, thick with the smell of half-melted tar roofing and with the odorous kitchen exhausts of a dozen all-night restaurants. The electric fans in the ceiling beat about, churning the atmosphere into motion, but adding to it neither buoyancy nor life. As Jimmy Ratcliffe said, we had "plenty of breeze, but precious little air."

The theater edition was on the presses and the night's weary work was dragging to its close when we heard the elevator gates slam in the corridor and the next moment Little Antone—smiling again, the Little Antone of old—burst through the swinging door into the room.

He looked neither to the right nor to the left, and with what could not have been more than four or five gigantic strides of his diminutive legs, he was across the room and through the door opposite. We heard one more step across the little ante-room and then another door swung to and we knew that he was in Henshaw's office.

Those of us who were still in the local room looked at one another and waited expectantly for the explosion. None came; and after a minute or so Little Antone stepped out into the ante-room between Henshaw's office and ours, and stood holding our swinging door wide open. Henshaw, we could see, was at the door opposite that opened from the small room into his office, and when Little Antone spoke he opened that also.

A moment later Henshaw himself stuck his head in the door. He was grinning and he motioned us in. The city editor's office is small, its walls lined with books and filing cases.

There is but one door, and a single window opposite, and Henshaw's big rolltop desk stands in the middle of the floor between the two.

"We've found out how our energetic friends across the street" (he meant the *Enquirer* people) "get their news," Henshaw told us as we came in. "It's very simple after it is explained. Watch."

Henshaw took a few pieces of blank copy paper and laid them on the flat top-piece above the pigeon-holes of his desk. "I always put the copy here after I have glanced over it. When it's up here, the boy knows that it has been passed and is ready to go down to the compositors. That's what I do with all the stuff—including that which disappeared. Now watch."

He walked over to the door leading into the ante-room and held it open. Little Antone went in to the second door opening through to the local room. "These two doors," explained Henshaw, "prevent such uncomfortable things as draughts between here and the local room; even when, like to-night, the windows of both rooms are wide open. When anyone passes through, one door has always swung shut before the other is opened, so that there is never a clear passageway all the way through—except," and here Henshaw paused, "except when two persons are going through at the same time. Suppose, for instance, that someone goes out and another follows a short distance behind. In that case there might well be a clear opening between the two rooms. We will imagine that this is happening now."

He held the door wide open and motioned Little Antone to open the other. What happened took only an instant. The wind, coming in half a dozen windows in the local room, swished through the channel thus

opened as though through a funnel, and in a trice had gathered up the papers on the exposed desk-top and whisked them straight across the room through the open window.

We were all grouped about the window in an instant, watching the scattered papers as they fluttered down toward the street. They kept edging steadily over toward the corner of the building as they fell, and when down perhaps two stories were caught suddenly in the grasp of the wind that swirled around the edge of the building and carried flutteringly across the street; each piece settling down finally on different parts of the great square roof of a department store opposite.

The *Enquirer* office was next door to the department store and the windows of its editorial rooms on the fourth floor looked directly out on the roof. We had less than a minute to wait before we saw someone step down from one of the windows and run about in the moonlight, gathering up the scattered sheets of paper, which, when he saw that they were all blank, he crumpled up and shoved into his pocket as he climbed back through the window.

"The mystery," said someone, after the figure below had disappeared, "is cleared."

"And for that," returned Henshaw, "we can thank our young friend here, whom I fired because I thought he took the stuff himself. I knew that it was either he or nobody, and I made a bad guess and chose him; a mistake," added Henshaw, gazing down at Little Antone, "which I will now rectify by rehiring him and firing nobody."

"Little Antone," continued he, and it was good to see the look on the kid's face as he heard the nickname, for a gruff "Boy!" or a "Here you!" was the way Henshaw generally ad-

dressed the copy kids. "Little Antone tells me that he was sure he had nothing to do with the disappearance of the copy, and, knowing that, he was equally sure that the mere firing of him would not help matters in the least. He realized the obvious fact that the copy must leave the *Sentinel* building before the *Enquirer* could get hold of it, and down there in the park below he found a spot from which he could view both the exits of both buildings at the same time. From that spot he found that he could also look up at the lighted windows of the place where he had held down his old job, and that he found to be an added comfort. Little Antone thought that if only he waited long enough and looked close enough, something would happen sooner or later. To-night he saw a sheet of copy paper come sailing through the window here, and as a direct result, our friends across the street will be deprived of the only source of real news that they ever had."

"It's a high-handed, disreputable thing to do," broke in Old Nevens, who writes editorials. "And one that should not be allowed to go unpunished."

At this we were silent, and it was then that Little Antone proved his real worth. "They'd use anything you wanted to send down to 'em,"

he declared. He was smiling his self-confident smile again as he said it, and Henshaw grinned as he reached down and lifted him up on the edge of his desk. It was easy somehow to feel paternal toward Little Antone, and, besides, he had given us all an idea.

In ten seconds Henshaw had it planned out. "The Mayor," he decided, "is going to resign at the Board of Supervisors' meeting tomorrow to become managing head of the Amalgamated Distillers' Association. Let's get out five hundred words on it quick, and we'll ship it across to our friends. Galvas, the owner of our paper, is a personal friend of the Mayor, and the *Enquirer* people will think that we got it as a straight tip. It will be too late to get any confirmation, and they'll swallow it whole!"

Which conclusion was so entirely correct that though six months have now gone by, the *Enquirer* is still apologizing desperately for their blunder.

Henshaw strongly suspects that if any more copy were to float across the street, it would be allowed to remain on the department store roof. Still, he is not a man to take chances, and whenever he raises his window he always has a screen put in the opening. Little Antone attends to the matter himself.





# THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE OLD LADY

By ANNE HOLLINGSWORTH WHARTON

"EVEN at fifty, one is not willing to look like a fright!" exclaimed a youthful-looking grandmother, as she adjusted an exceedingly coquettish hat above a half-moon of glossy brown hair.

"No, nor at sixty, either," rejoined her companion, a still handsome woman of sixty-five, turning upon the first speaker an admiring and incredulous face. "But you are not fifty—it is impossible!"

"So the family Bible says, although I sometimes doubt it myself; but children are even more merciless chronologists than family records, and I know that my son George was born when I was five-and-twenty, and that he attained that great age on his last birthday. I must admit that I occasionally forget that he is not my brother, and he insists that I frequently introduce him to strangers as such, which is, of course, gross exaggeration."

"For some reason," replied the older woman, "fifty is not as old as it once was, or sixty, or even seventy. Perhaps it is because the woman of to-day has so many pleasures in her life, so much travel, and so many interests, that she has no time to grow old."

"Whether for that or for some other reason, the old lady has become a *rara avis* among us. Mr. Owen Wister found some of them in Charleston—charming old ladies—but in writing of them he treats them as survivals of a bygone age, much as the scientist speaks of the

ichthyosaurus and other prehistoric creatures. In old times, in our grandmothers' or even our mothers' youth, we should both have been relegated to the fireside with our knitting and our Bibles, and called old ladies."

"Yes, my grandmother's portrait at forty-five represents her in a cap, with spectacles and knitting decorously placed on a table by her side. I can see her now, a lady of medium height in a black bombazine dress, black silk apron, plain white net cap, gold-rimmed spectacles, which reposed upon her soft white hair when not in active service; low shoes which she called 'Jeffersons,' and in her hand a 'reticule,' which held her knitting, and always some peppermint drops for her grandchildren."

I confessed to having followed a real old lady through a crowded thoroughfare one day, because she reminded me of my grandmother. There was an irresistible fascination about the tall, spare figure in plain bonnet and mantilla, with umbrella, reticule, and all the other almost forgotten paraphernalia of old ladyhood. The severe lines of the unadorned figure carried with them an atmosphere of far-off childish days, with their radiance of simple pleasures, and sorrows dimmed and shadowed by distance. I walked behind the figure, then beside it, longing to peer beneath the sheltering old-fashioned bonnet, to see whether the face of the wearer was grandmotherly and kind, just as the sparkish young blades of the olden times

must often have peeped at pretty Quaker faces beneath their jealously guarding screens of pasteboard and silk that, hideous in themselves, served only to make the youthful wearers seem more fair.

Trite as we may find the pursuit of a young and beautiful maiden, it still forms the groundwork of most romances, but it has remained for an English writer of fiction to choose for his theme the trials and disappointments of an elderly widower in search of an old lady to fill his heart and cheer his fireside. The chief difficulty of the hero of this ingenious tale was the irrepressible and discouraging youthfulness of the ladies whom he met at hotels and boarding-houses — the discouragement lying in the fact that they made this modern *Coelebs* appear old by contrast. One night, in the excitement of a fire in the hotel in which he was stopping, there emerged from her apartment in a nondescript costume of scant petticoats, fur caps, and steamer hood, a genuine old lady, with no youthful airs about her. The progress of the fire was fortunately soon arrested, but the lady's nerves, jarred by the unwonted stir and anxiety, required the gentle stimulation of tea and sympathetic companionship. The former panacea was furnished by her own tea-basket, which she had brought into the hall for safety, while the latter consolation the enraptured widower was happy to supply. A blissful and all too fleeting hour was spent over smoking cups of tea, the presiding genius of the feast never once causing her companion to feel old by contrast. On the other hand, she spread about her, even amid the confusion and wreckage of the fire, a sweet and satisfying atmosphere of old-time comfort and home cheer. The pair parted friends, she to enjoy what beauty sleep might still be

had, he to dream of a home blessed with the presence of a congenial and not too youthful companion; but, alas, when *Coelebs* met the assembled household at luncheon the next day his friend of the fire and the tea could not be found. She, feeling sensitive on the score of the rather unconventional costume and circumstance of their meeting, hesitated to address him, while he failed to recognize the lady of his dreams, and of his brief acquaintance, in the youngish woman before him in luxuriant frizzes, mushroom hat, and jaunty gown. Thus one happy household failed to take its place among the homes of England, and a lonely widower settled down to the cheerless life of a boarding-house, where the women were all painfully young. The active, energetic, outdoors grandmother, and the gay, décolleté, bridge-playing grandmother, have made a place for themselves, and many of them are doing their share in the world's work, in charities, in philanthropy, and *indirectly* in political life. Even so, and at the risk of being called a "back number," I find myself regretting the disappearance of the old lady from modern life, and confess to the weakness of having a pitying corner in my heart for the little people of the new régime who are destined to grow up without the welcome, if sometimes injudicious, ministrations of the old-fashioned grandmother.

Lovely in the retrospect, as in the reality, was this universal grandmother, who, guiltless of false fronts or of the vagaries of fashion, was always to be found by her own fireside. Here she turned the heels of an endless succession of stockings to be worn by the rising generation, and sweetened their lives with half-way regales of gingerbread and molasses candy, all undismayed by the disconcerting admonitions of parents

who, in view of the increase of dyspepsia or the decrease of vitality among modern children, have issued a stern edict against all such toothsome delights of youth. Adults of to-day, who have survived this older and more genial dispensation, will endeavor to prove to us by unanswerable logic that the growing child is better without indulgent grandmothers, and that the world has gained by the exchange of the old lady of the fireside for the active woman of society and affairs, whose middle age is prolonged indefinitely. Without entering into the merits of this question, in which as mere logicians they undoubtedly have the best of the argument, we still find

ourselves unreasoningly lamenting the passing away of a serene and restful figure from the background of our strenuous and progressive age.

As John Adams lamented the disappearance of short clothes, knee-buckles, lace ruffles, and powdered hair, with the courtly graces that attended them, while fully realizing the greater conveniences of the less ornate costume of the latter-day citizen, we, with all due appreciation of the good work for the outside world performed by the older women of to-day, may still pause to regret the passing of the picturesque and comfortable presence of the old lady of an earlier time.

## CHEERFULNESS

By LEONARD KEENE HIRSHBERG

IT is perhaps true that no nervousness goes hand in hand with absolute cheerfulness. Show me a person with "nerves," and I'll show you a pessimist. On the other hand, scratch a morose, sad dog and you'll find one saturated with nerves. Dr. Isabel MacDonald, of London, has recently completed a report upon the influence of cheerfulness on a neurotic disposition. Here you learn that though it be comely and grand to be unhappy, few people have such great comeliness and cleverness, and a stable disposition enough to be both non-nervous and unhappy.

A pessimist has been described as a person who of two evils chooseth both, but a nervous, neurotic individual chooses all the evils which find a place in fertile and morbidly attentive thoughts.

The proof that all the ills which literally and actually pass muster un-

der the much overworked term of "nerves" are curable by the will shows that the term is absurd, and that "nerves" are really thoughts plus muscles.

Your heart's desire in perfect fulfillment—namely, luxuries, loving folks, everything that might be expected to assuage the wishes, the longings and the yearnings of any one—do not seem to cure these perverse points of view. No matter how lucky you are, when these morbid thoughts assail you, the sensation and mental images of the dreadful, the unpleasant, the disagreeable, still rise up, like Banquo's ghost, to plague the possessors.

In other words, bad habits of the intellect, the reason, the judgment, are just as destructive of the will and the mental fiber as are bad habits of action. The hundred and one fears, the days of heaviness, the

petty anxieties, the foolish dreads, the indefinable, half-expressed terrors are caused by thought-habits, warped judgment, bizarre reasoning and similar side-tracking semi-delusions.

The delusion exists among a number of alleged "authorities" that modern life is more strenuous than it once was; that overwork and lobster-palace diets explain these disturbances, also attributed wrongly to "nerves." Worry and curious notions, "in-thinking" or the concentration of attention upon yourself, the habit of thought which causes you forever to cross all sorts of anticipated bridges which never cross any rivers, all lie at the basis of "nerves." Overwork and the strenuous life have nothing to do with the problem at all.

The prevalent method of trying to cure "neurasthenia" and the different types of illness related near or far to "nerves" cannot be expected to succeed, because they are based upon a mistaken understanding of the trouble. "Rest cures," "work cures," "electric cures," "psychic cures," "hygienic cures," "analytic cures," and all the rest of them are fallacious and unsuccessful because they are founded upon erroneous premises.

The reason many such sufferers arrive ultimately in the hands of quacks, patent-medicine sharks, religious cults, and others with something to sell or think about is because these all really offer some mental counter-irritation as a benefit.

It follows from this that women who "in-think" can best be cured by a physician who, by painstaking efforts, exposes their innermost, self-centring, hypersensitive thoughts. Once these are unearthed, all the wise physician or nurse needs do is

to rediscipline, educate, train, and cajole the sufferer into better, saner, and happier thoughts, points of view, and sensations.

After all, it is a simple thing. All that need be done is to chase the worried business man to the ball park or the tennis-courts; put the supersensitive barber to hoeing rows on the farm; have the harassed housewife take up languages, the drama, golf, and rowing.

Perhaps the much-maligned kaffeeklatsch and sewing society, the scandal sheet and tell-tale gossip indulged in by women are really the counter-irritants necessary to ward off many selfish, narrow, egotistic, internal thoughts.

On the other hand, there is not a shadow of a doubt but what gambling, card-playing, smoking, drinking, and similar bouts with over-exciting or habit-forming dopes of one sort and another by men exaggerate the evil of wrong thoughts, self-indulgent viewpoints, pampering animalism and sensuality.

Just as the whole public mind, general public opinion, as Disraeli said, is the creation of master writers and masterly activities, so the self-convictions and tenets, the surmises and presumptions, the assurance and the faiths, the credence and the principles imbued in any particular individual are to be evolved, directed, guided, changed, improved, or switched about by the master writings and activities of others.

It behooves you, then, if you would be well and strong and wanting in nerves to read widely and generally of the best that can be obtained, to work the muscles in the most approved methods of physical culture, to run, swim, dance and walk, to do exercises under the guidance of some expert physical culturist.



# BUT WE KNOW WHAT WE LIKE

## LITERARY ADVENTURES OF EVERYDAY FOLK

Chroniced by ALARIC WATSON

"WHY do people read books?" The question was advanced by the Tired Business Man. He had been listening to the chatter of the people about him with languid interest, and now he had the air of a man who wanted to start something.

The Critic cleared his throat, but the Frivolous Young Person got ahead of him.

"To be amused," she replied categorically.

"If," observed the Clergyman, "as is often stated, the Bible is the best selling book, I doubt if your reply is unassailable. Some of us may find relaxation in reading certain portions of the Bible, but do we read it for amusement?"

The Frivolous Young Person made an equivocal defense, *sotto voce*, to the Critic, who showed her up by saying in a loud voice:

"Well, you ought to."

When the Tired Business Man's voice could be heard again he was saying that it was all very well to read books for information and stimulation some of the time, but to read for relaxation was both commendable and necessary.

"What, then, do you read for this worthy purpose?" asked the Clergyman.

"Well"—and the Business Man somehow suggested that he felt as though he were confessing—"there is a certain kind of simple, homely story that always appeals to me. I

suppose all you highbrows will pour the vials of scorn on me when I say that I liked 'Daddy Long Legs' immensely, and that I waited impatiently for Miss Webster's new book, 'Dear Enemy,' to appear. I'll stand by my colors, though; and I think I differ from most of you only in that I am man enough to speak out in meeting."

Nobody either affirmed or denied the impeachment, and the Tired Business Man continued:

"I once knew a sea-captain who enjoyed reading Kate Douglas Wiggin's books. I found him in his bunk one afternoon with a copy of 'Mother Carey's Chickens.' He liked the Russian novelists, too, but when he got fed up on realism he turned with relish to a breath of newmown hay."

"Have you, perhaps, found something new in this line?" asked the Clergyman.

"Two of them—'Living Up to Billy,' and 'Eve Dorre.' Both are books that can safely be left on the library table, yet each has a distinct personality in its method of providing wholesome entertainment. *Billy* in the former is the young son of a woman who is doing time at Sing Sing for picking pockets, and it is his aunt, a cabaret dancer, who "lives up" to him. The characters are well drawn, and the story is altogether appealing. And there is a good, old-fashioned "live happily ever after"

quality that is so frowned upon nowadays by literary epicures.

"The other book is the most naïve piece of work that I have seen for years—what the French would label *pour la jeune fille*. It has the flavor of a translation from the French, and most of the action, if its leisurely motion may be termed action, takes place in France. *Eve* tells the story of her life from early girlhood to middle age. She is by turns foolish, wise, witty and lovable. She is always real, and—well, I like her."

"Strange as it may seem," said the Critic, "I am disposed to agree with you—about the occasional merits of what might be called Ladies'-Home-Journalism in literature, I mean."

The Tired Business Man exhibited elaborate surprise.

"Impossible. I can't imagine what could cause such a change in your point of view."

"That," continued the Critic, "is because you haven't been reading Przybyszewski—as I have."

"Przyby—who?" demanded the Tired Business Man. "No, I haven't. What is it?"

"It isn't an it. It's a he—an author," explained the Advanced Woman.

"A Polish author, in fact," the Critic said.

"Author of '*Homo Sapiens*,' which has recently been published."

"Oh, now I know," said the Tired Business Man. "I've seen the book. The author's name has lots of z's and things in it. I didn't know how it was pronounced."

"That's the simplest thing about the book," observed the Clergyman. "The publisher spells it phonetically on the cover—Shee be sheffsky—so that no observant person can go amiss. He goes on to say that the book is a very modern love story. But I don't know. You're young, Critic. Is it modern?"

"If it is," the Critic answered, "I'm a convert to the Plutocrat's old-fashioned idealism. Insane, certainly—both the hero and the book. The hero, especially, is a perfect example of the type that Don Marquis describes as 'cognac-scented cognoscenti.' I think that he drinks, raves and makes love even more continuously and ardently than the hero of Artzibashev's '*Breaking Point*' which so captured the Business Man's fancy."

"Humph!" interrupted the Tired Business Man.

"There is a certain similarity between the two books, as a matter of fact. Both are stories of men of real or supposed genius, who are erotomaniacs in the last analysis—as was Dreiser's '*Genius*,' by the way. The theme is popular this year.. But as achievements, there is a world of difference. '*Breaking Point*' was unpleasant but impressive. '*Homo Sapiens*' is merely unpleasant. As for being 'a very modern love story'—I thought it was neither modern nor lovely."

"It is very easy to write books about men of genius," said the Clergyman. "At least from one standpoint. For very few of us know the species at all—and how then can we say what's amiss with the author's view? There's a new book by Peter Clark McFarlane, for instance—'*Held to Answer*'—which illustrates my point admirably. And by the way, it's an excellent example of what the Critic calls 'Ladies'-Home-Journalism'—gone rampant."

"What is it about?" inquired the Lady Who Stays at Home.

"It is the story of a Good Young Man—one *John Hampstead*. The author says he is good and we must believe him. *John* is also a *Success*—always. In fact, *John* is unbelievably talented; as a railroad man, an actor, a book agent, and a preacher.

But, two women love him, and that, as you know, is always a provocative of trouble, especially as one of the ladies is an actress. I think she has green eyes, although I don't know that the author says so. But she has that kind of a disposition. But there—why pick on the book? It has merits of a sort—action in particular. And it will entertain people who are not too exacting. My quarrel with it is more temperamental than anything else. There is an unwarranted buoyancy about it, and assumption of value—moral and otherwise that is not necessarily consonant with the facts. In short it's the sort of novel you'd expect an advertising man to write—or a professional optimist of some other sort."

The Critic smiled reminiscently.

"I think you are rather hard on the advertising profession," he said. "Although your attitude pleases me. But what you say about optimism reminds me of something. Some four or five years ago when I first began reading Conrad, I decided that he was a very pessimistic person indeed; and I ventured to mention this to a woman I know, who assured me that he was to her mind the very essence of optimism. I've changed my views somewhat since that time, but I still fail to see where Conrad's roseate vision comes in. She still holds her original opinion, however. I believe I once mentioned this to you, Clergy-

man, and you told me that to older people he did seem optimistic—that youth's pessimism was age's optimism, or something cryptic of that sort."

"I'd hardly agree with either of you," said the Advanced Woman. "To me he is merely fearless—and magical."

"To me also, very largely," agreed the Critic. "I spoke of it simply because there is a new book of his—'Within the Tides.' Have you read it?"

"Not yet. I mean to, however."

"Oh, yes—by all means do. For it is magical. Or rather they are; for the book contains four long stories—each one splendid, tragical and profoundly human. Like all of Conrad's other work, each is a study of imperfection of some sort—which is perhaps what first gave me that impression of pessimism. There is *Renouard* in 'The Planter of Malata,' for instance, with his ruinous reticence. And *Davidson*, in 'Because of the Dollars'—the man who had lost his smile. And all the others, unforgettable people. But you can't enjoy a Conrad story vicariously. You must experience it—for you don't merely read it."

"Living Up to Billy," by Elizabeth Cooper. Frederick A. Stokes Co., New York.

"Eve Dorre," by Emily Vielé Strother. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York.

"Homo Sapiens," by Stanislaw Przybyszewski. A. A. Knopf, New York. \$1.50 net.

"Held to Answer," by Peter Clark MacFarlane. Little, Brown & Co., Boston, Mass. \$1.35.

"Within the Tides," by Joseph Conrad. Doubleday, Page & Co., Garden City, N. Y. \$1.25.



# REVOLVING WHEELS

Plain Talk on Scientific Achievement

By C. H. CLAUDY



## THE MODERN ORGAN

A MAN went to sleep at the wrong time and place and dreamed. He was in the hands of Powers That Be, compelled to perform impossible tasks or suffer impossible penalties.

"You shall play six musical instruments at once," was one command.

"You shall blow ten thousand flutes at one time and make music from them all," was another.

"You shall blow pipes out of tune with each other and make music come from them," was a third.

"Though but two hands and two feet are yours, yet shall you be in a hundred places at once, open a thousand doors at the same time, and be not hurried in the doing," was a fourth.

The man who slept in the wrong place and time woke up to find an actual man doing all these things at once and making no great feat of the matter. The man had gone to sleep in church and awoke to the music of the Voluntary on the pipe organ.

A seventy-five piece orchestra is complex, its music complicated. If one excepts the possibility of a violinist playing double strings, seventy-five notes at once is its limit. A church organ can double, aye and

triple this number, without giving the organist any special difficulty. Indeed, if a thousand players of wind instruments, flutes, horns, oboes, clarinets, etc., were given the wind-power of Boreas, the strength of Samson, provided each with an instrument commensurate in size and power to the pipes of an organ, they could not commence to bring forth the effects which one organist produces.

Go inside a pipe-organ, walk its narrow galleries, between its multitudinous rows of, literally, thousands of pipes—ten thousand is by no means unheard of in a large organ. If, now, the organist plays, find out where the sounds come from. You will listen in vain at the open end of a pipe. Indeed you may find what you take to be an open end closed tightly up! Listen at the lip or mouth of the pipe; you may not be convinced that all the sound comes from it. Sound is produced at the mouth, but comes from the pipe as a whole.

There are two kinds and a thousand varieties of pipes. Flue pipes are open or closed at the top, have "wind" entering the bottom, which air stream plays rapidly in and out, in and out, of the lip. This thin film of air, rapidly vibrating, sets the whole contents of the tube vi-



brating, with a speed depending primarily on its length. Reed pipes have a metal reed to set the whole column of air in vibration.

With these fundamental varieties the organ builder makes his wonder instrument. He makes pipes of wood and of metal. He builds them square, round, straight, and bent. He has short, fat pipes with grinning wide mouths, long, thin pipes frowning with narrow ones, pipes which are in tune and pipes which are out of tune, but which sound all right when they are played. By changing the dimensions, the size and shape of lip and throat, the material, the power of wind used to blow them, he makes a pipe sound like flute, oboe, clarinet, horn, violin; sigh, moan, scream, sob or laugh. He combines two pipes on a single note, and tunes them at variance with each other. The effect is curious and beautiful. If one pipe vibrates three hundred and twelve times a second and the other three hundred and thirteen, only once a second will the two pipes sound exactly together. The result is that the note has a "beat" in it—it throbs, throbs, throbs, and we have a *vox humana*.

Few musical notes are pure, single tones. Most have the foundation tone, the pitch of the note, and a number of higher, fainter tones, harmonics or overtones. They are what makes a 'cello or a violin so rich to the ear. Certain organ sounds are thin, pale, colorless, because they have few overtones. It is nothing to the organ builder. He merely manufactures a lot of overtones, little pipes in ranks of three, four or five to a note, and calls it a "mixture" stop. Such a stop sounds a chord for every note, and two notes together resemble a pig stuck under a gate, or a steam calliope with delirium tremens. Played with the

full organ, however, this screaming discord supplies the overtones to the pale, washed-out grave tones and the result is a richness which sends the chills chasing down one's spine.

An organ has pipes of various "feet," sixteen and eight and thirty-two feet and so on. The terms refer to the dimension of the pipe which speaks the normal C of the scale. This is an eight-foot pipe. A sixteen-foot pipe speaks an octave below, the thirty-two-foot pipe, (a somewhat rare institution because of expense), a note two octaves below. The four-foot pipe speaks an octave above the great C, the two-foot pipe a note two octaves above.

Then there is a twelfth, a stop having a length of two and two-thirds feet for the C, which sounds a G instead of the C when the C key is pressed and which also makes delirious sounds if improperly used.

Normal man possesses two hands of five fingers each and two feet. Had he more, no church would hold the organs he would make! In order to make the most of what nature has supplied, the organ builder builds several organs in one and puts a row of keyboards before the player, as well as a keyboard under his feet. A great pipe organ will combine a Pedal Organ, Great Organ, Solo Organ, Choir Organ, Swell Organ, and perhaps an Echo Organ. Unaided by mechanism, the organist can play any three at once; by coupling the service organs together, he can play on them all at once, if he wants to.

It is one of the great difficulties of the organ. On a piano, the air, or tenor parts, are usually played with the right hand, the bass or accompaniment with the left. On a pipe organ one may play the air with feet, the accompaniment with right hand, a delicate obligato on another organ with left. Or the left hand

may carry the tenor, right hand the interior or accompaniment, and the feet the bass. A good organist has a "polyphonic ear brain" which hears every note distinct from every other one, and the muscles of a contortionist!

But imagine not that an organist's duties end with playing five banks of keys, and pushing or pulling stops from the hundred or so in front of him! The pipes of the swell organ, and often parts of the other organs, are in a huge box or chest with a Venetian blind shutter. The more it is opened, the greater the sound, the more it is closed, the softer the music. By this blind, actuated with a foot pedal, the player shades his music.

Because a man has only ten digits, it would be impossible for him to play complicated music and do complicated "stopping" at the same time. The organ builder provides "combinations," mechanism by which great groups of stops can be manipulated by a single touch. These the organist arranges at will, previous to a performance. But the "stops" do not end with those valves which control any one set of pipes. There are multitudinous "couplers" by

which one organ is coupled to another, one octave to another, and the resources of any organ made possible for all.

The resources of engineer, electrician, fine mechanic, acoustician and scientist have been heavily drawn upon. In its essential, a single pipe which emits a sound when wind pressure enters it, a ten-thousand-pipe organ becomes one of the most complicated, delicate, wonderful pieces of mechanism in the world. It has more voices and can play more notes at once than any orchestra, yet is more under the control of the single player than any orchestra is under the control of conductor. The man on the bench may sound any one pipe from ten thousand, or play a hundred at once, and find them obedient to his bidding. Growing from the first musical instrument—the single pipe—the organ is the greatest development man has made in music. A fine pipe organ, well played, is not only a musical treat, but a remarkable demonstration of what brains can do to expand nature's ten fingers to a hundred, a man's one brain to control a whole orchestra of wind instruments.





# Travel

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## Walnuts and Wine

### STOPPED THE RUNS

First War-Fan: "What are the Russians doing?"

Second War-Fan: "Well, they put the Czar in the box and shifted the Grand Duke to right field."—*Judge*.

### MAIN ATTRACTION

"Your wife seems busy these days."

"Yes; she is to address a woman's club."

"Ah, working on her address?"

"No; on her dress."—*Louisville Courier-Journal*.

### CLEVER FEAT

"Father," said a small boy, "what is a demagog?"

"A demagog, my son, is a man who can rock the boat himself and persuade everybody that there's a terrible storm at sea."—*Woman's Journal*.

### TURNABOUT

The doctor entered the patient's room in the morning, and, according to habit, read the chart first thing. He was a little surprised to read:

"2 A. M. Patient very restless, nurse sleeping quietly."—*Collier's Weekly*.

### NO ACORN

When James A. Garfield was president of Oberlin College, a man brought for entrance as a student his son, for whom he wished a shorter course than the regular one.

"The boy can never take all that in," said the father. "He wants to get through quicker. Can you arrange it for him?"

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Garfield. "He can take a short course; it all depends on what you want to make of him. When God wants to make an oak he takes a hundred years, but he takes only two months to make a squash."—*Christian Register*.

### PROFITABLE SPORT

Representative Bartholdt, of Missouri, tells the story of an old man with a soft, daft look, who sat on a park bench in the sun, with rod and line, as if he were fishing; but the line, with a worm on the hook, dangled over a bed of bright primroses.

"Daft!" said a passer-by to himself. "Daft! Bughouse! Nice-looking old fellow, too. It's a pity."

Then, with a gentle smile, the passer-by approached the old man and said:

"What are you doing, uncle?"

"Fishing, sir," he answered.

"Fishing, eh? Well, uncle, come and have a drink."

The old man shouldered his rod and followed the kindly stranger to the corner saloon. There he regaled himself with a large glass of dark beer and a good five-cent cigar. His host, contemplating him in a friendly, protecting way, as he sipped and smoked, said:

"So you were fishing? How many have you caught this morning?"

The old man blew a smoke-cloud toward the ceiling. Then, after a pause, he said:

"You are the seventh, sir."—*Philadelphia Bulletin*.



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## WALNUTS AND WINE

### LIFE

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#### Chapter II

"Isn't the moon beautiful?"

#### Chapter III

"Oozum love wuzum?"

#### Chapter IV

"Do you—"

"I do—"

#### Chapter V

"Da—da—da—da!"

#### Chapter VI

"Where the samhill's dinner?"

—*Chaparral.*

### CAUTIOUS

"I want a careful chauffeur—one who takes no chances."

"That's me, sir! I require references or salary in advance."—*Judge.*

### GETTING EVEN

"Pray, don't go yet, Mr. Basso, I want you to sing something for me."

"Oh, you must excuse me to-night; it is very late, and I should disturb the neighbors."

"Never mind the neighbors," answered the lady, quickly; "they poisoned our dog yesterday."—*Tit-Bits.*

### SPOILSPORT

"Young man," said the magistrate severely, "the assault you have committed on your poor wife was most brutal. Do you know of any reason why I should not send you to prison?"

"If you do, your Honor," replied the prisoner at the bar, hopefully, "it will break up our honeymoon."—*Philadelphia Ledger.*

### NOT THEIR FAULT

Uncle Josh was comfortably lighting his pipe in the living-room one evening when Aunt Maria glanced up from her knitting.

"John," she remarked, "do you know that next Sunday will be the twenty-fifth anniversary of our wedding?"

"You don't say so, Maria!" responded Uncle Josh, pulling vigorously on his corn-cob pipe. "What about it?"

"Nothing," answered Aunt Maria, "only I thought maybe we ought to kill them two Rhode Island Red chickens."

"But, Maria," demanded Uncle Josh, "how can you blame them two Rhode Island Reds for what happened twenty-five years ago?"—*Kansas City Star.*

### THE PATRIOT

A Belgian cripple stumped about Brussels declaring, "We gave those Germans a rare hiding before they got to Brussels." He was handed up before a stony-faced circle of German officers, who decreed, "You will be shot—unless you become a German."

The cripple thought it over and was sworn in as German there and then. The chief German officer took him by the hand, saying, "You are a German now."

As he left, the cripple muttered, "Those Belgians gave us a rare hiding before we got to Brussels."—*Tit-Bits.*

### A WAYWARD TONGUE

The chairman of the committee was addressing a meeting at a teachers' institute:

"My friends, the schoolwork is the bulhouse of civilization, I mean—ah—"

He began to feel frightened.

"The bulhouse is the schoolwork of civ—"

A smile could be felt.

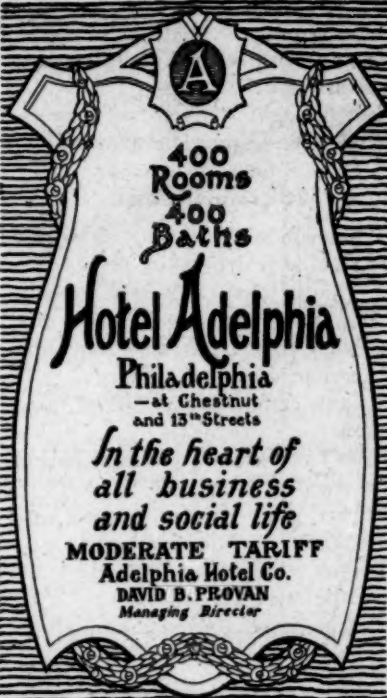
"The workhouse is the bulschool of—"

He was evidently twisted.

"The schoolbul is the housework—"

An audible snigger spread over the audience.

"The bulschool—"



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## WALNUTS AND WINE

He was getting wild. So were his hearers. He mopped his perspiration, gritted his teeth, and made a fresh start.

"The schoolhouse, my friends—"

A sigh of relief went up. Hamlet was himself again!

He gazed serenely around. The light of triumphant self-confidence was enthroned upon his brow.

"Is the woolbark—"

And that is when he lost consciousness.—*Answers.*

### PERFECTLY TAME

To say of a man that he will make a good husband is much the same sort of a compliment as to say of a horse that he is perfectly safe for a woman to drive.—*Puck.*

### WHAT HE APPRECIATED

"I have never owned any automobiles," said the man who hadn't yet paid for his home, "but I can say one thing in praise of them."

"What is that?" inquired Henderson.

"They have made mortgages respectable."—*Judge.*

### DOOMED

Here is a specimen of Australian frightfulness found in the advertising columns of a Melbourne paper:

We refuse to supply the Kaiser with —'s herbal skin ointment. Let him suffer.

Even the thickest skin must feel this.—*Manchester Guardian.*

### A TRUE PROPHET

One of the attractions of the church fête was a fortune-teller's tent.

A lady took her ten-year-old, red-haired, freckled son inside. The woman of wisdom bent over the crystal ball.

"Your son will be a very distinguished man if he lives long enough!" she murmured in deep, mysterious tones.

"Oh, how nice," gushed the proud mother. "And what will he be distinguished for?"

"For old age," replied the fortune-teller slowly.—*Knoxville Sentinel.*

### TAKING A RISK

"Ain't you rather young to be left in charge of a drug-store?"

"Perhaps; what can I do for you?"

"Don't your employers know it's dangerous to leave a mere boy like you in charge of such a place?"

"I am competent to serve you, madam."

"Don't you know you might poison some one?"

"There is no danger of that, madam; what can I do for you?"

"Think I had better go to the store down the street."

"I can serve you just as well as they can and as cheaply."

"Well, you may give me a two-cent stamp, but it doesn't look right."  
—*Toronto Mail and Empire.*

### A NEW NAME FOR IT

He was travelling in the South and had to put up over night at a second-rate hotel in western Georgia. He said to the clerk when he entered, "Where shall I autograph?"

"Autograph?" said the clerk.

"Yes; sign my name, you know."

"Oh, right here."

As he was signing his name in the register in came three roughly clothed, unshorn fellows immediately recognizable as Georgia "crackers." One of them advanced to the desk.

"Will you autograph?" asked the clerk, his face aglow with the pleasure that comes from the consciousness of intellectual superiority.

"Certainly," said the "cracker," his face no less radiant than that of the clerk, "mine's rye."—*The Argonaut.*





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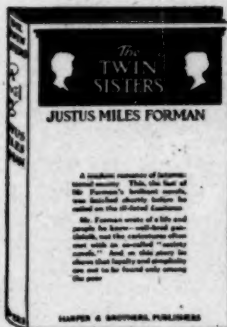
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## WALNUTS AND WINE

### HAPPY ENDING WANTED

A charming auburn-haired nurse tells the story. She bent over the bed of one badly wounded man and asked him if he would like anything to read. The soldier fixed a humorous eye on her and said: "Miss, can you get me a nice novel? I'd like one about a golden-haired girl and a wounded soldier with a happy ending." After this the pretty nurse looks down contemptuously on civilian compliments. — *Manchester Guardian*.

### STRATEGY

A young woman took down the receiver of the telephone one day and discovered that the line was in use.

"I just put on a pan of beans for dinner," she heard one woman complacently informing another.

She hung up the receiver and waited for the conversation to end. Upon returning to the telephone she found the woman still talking. Three times she waited, and then, at last becoming exasperated, she broke into the conversation.

"Madam, I smell your beans burning," she announced crisply.

A horrified scream greeted the remark, and the young woman was able to put in her call. — *Harper's Magazine*.

### UNEQUALLY ARMED

Uncle Eph, an old colored man, was up in court, accused of stealing a watch. He pleaded not guilty, and, moreover, brought against the complainant a counter-charge of assault. The man, he declared, had tried to kill him with an iron kettle.

During the cross-examination, the attorney, Lawyer Bennet, demanded, "Dare you to say that my client attacked you with an iron kettle?"

"Dat what he done, sah," replied Uncle Eph, with a nervous gulph.

"With an iron kettle, eh?" sarcastically reiterated the lawyer. "That's a fine story for a big, strong fellow like you to try to impose upon this honorable court! And had you nothing with which to defend yourself?"

"Only de watch, sah," was the unwary reply; "but what's a watch agin an iron kettle, sah?" — *Harper's Magazine*.

### JOY OF EATING

A well-known banker in a downtown restaurant was eating mush and milk.

"What's the matter?" inquired a friend.

"Got dyspepsia."

"Don't you enjoy your meals?"

"Enjoy my meals?" snorted the indignant dyspeptic. "My meals are merely guide-posts to take medicine before or after." — *Illustrated Sunday Magazine*.

### PAYING HIS WAY

In a rural court the old squire had made a ruling so unfair that three young lawyers at once protested against such a miscarriage of justice. The squire immediately fined each of the lawyers \$5 for contempt of court.

There was silence, and then an older lawyer walked slowly to the front of the room and deposited a \$10 bill with the clerk. He then addressed the judge as follows:

"Your Honor, I wish to state that I have twice as much contempt for this court as any man in the room." — *Youth's Companion*.

### COSTLY ABLUTIONS

"LADIES—30 pounds washed and dried, \$1; excess, 4 cents per pound. Denver Wet Wash. Phone Gallup 1234." — *Rocky Mountain News*.

